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BTL
Between The Lines

The Rise Of 'License To Discriminate'

LGBT Baby Boomers Face Tough Retirement Hurdles

Lesbian Judge To Speak At Interfaith Service

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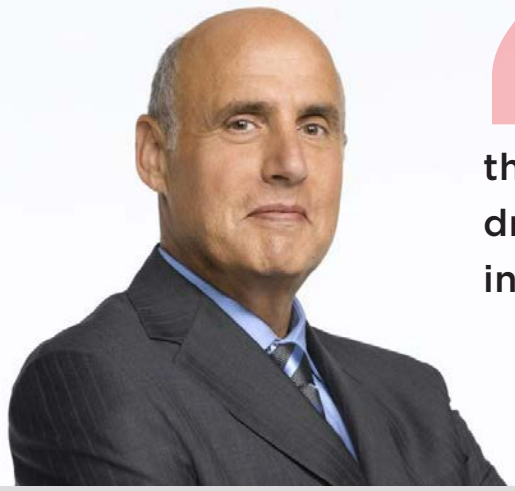

> When we opened 'Transparent' in Los Angeles, that line where Maura says, 'All my life I've been dressing up as a man,' the audience broke out into applause. It was **unbelievable.**
>
> – Jeffrey Tambor, page 24

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WCC Expands LGBT Protections

At its Nov. 18 meeting, the Washtenaw Community College (WCC) Board of Trustees voted unanimously to expand protections for transgender, lesbian, bisexual and gay students, faculty and staff for the first time in over 20 years.

This historic action is the result of decisive action by WCC President Rose Bellanca, at the direction of the Trustees, following public remarks from Jim Toy Community Center namesake Jim Toy, and long time LGBT advocate Andre Wilson at the October WCC Board of Trustees meeting.

"WCC plays a crucial role serving our community as a strong economic driver," said Brad O'Conner, President of the Jim Toy Community Center. "It is important that policies at WCC reflect the values of our diverse community. We applaud President Bellanca and her team for their swift action to bring four policy change recommendations to the Board in just three weeks, and we thank the Board of Trustees immensely for their decisive action to protect students, faculty and staff from discrimination."

This is the third success of the Jim Toy Community Center in the last 18 months working with local government entities to ensure full protection inclusive of gender identity and gender expression. Washtenaw County updated the county's non-discrimination policy in September of 2013 and the city of Ann Arbor updated TLBG protections in October of 2014.

"Credit should also be given to the WCC Political Science Club and OutSpace students who supported this effort internally at the college by sending letters to Trustees and especially to those who spoke at the meeting in support of these policy changes," said Jim Toy. "These students showed leadership and helped give the trustees the support they needed to make these historic changes possible."

Affirmations Seeks LGBTQ-Friendly Healthcare Providers

Affirmations is looking for healthcare providers to list themselves in their Health & Wellness Network.

Since 2005, Affirmations has hosted a network of LGBTQ friendly healthcare providers in Southeastern Michigan and has recently moved this network onto a new online platform. This network offers a chance for providers to connect to members of the LGBTQ community while offering LGBTQ people a connection to healthcare providers that fit their needs.

"Do you know of a healthcare provider that has offered sensitive, culturally competent care?" Affirmations asks. "Nominate them for the Health & Wellness Network! Nominating a provider creates opportunities for others seeking competent care in southeastern Michigan."

To nominate a healthcare worker or to learn more about the Health & Wellness Network, email health.wellness@goaffirmations.org, call 313-749-8831 or visit www.goaffirmations.org.

The Rise Of 'License To Discriminate'; The Failure Of LGBT Civil Rights

LAME DUCK ANALYSIS

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING – The last weeks of any legislative session are often full of lawmaking chicanery, and this session is no different. As the so-called lame duck session was gaveling in, the Michigan LGBT community believed that they would finally, for the first time since 1981, have civil rights protections added to the state law known as the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. Now, with just over a week left in the session, amending the state's civil rights law is off the table, and in its place is a legislative sleight of hand – civil rights protections based on "religious freedom."

So what is religious freedom? According to House Bill 5958, "'Exercise of religion' means the practice or observance of religion, including an act or refusal to act, that is substantially motivated by a sincerely held religious belief, whether or not compelled by or central to a system of religious belief." The legislation was introduced by Speaker Jase Bolger (R-Marshall) to "balance" the civil rights of religious people in Michigan and the civil rights of the LGBT community.

At the same press conference in early November, Frank Foster, a Republican who lost his bid for re-election over his support for LGBT equality, announced he was introducing a bill designed to extend civil rights to lesbians, gays and bisexuals – while excluding the transgender community. Foster's bill, along with a comprehensive and inclusive bill introduced earlier in session by Sam Singh (D-East Lansing), received a hearing before the House Commerce Committee.

That hearing went on for over an hour and a half, featuring five people testifying for the need for the legislation and at least two who opposed the bill. Those speaking on behalf of the Singh bill included Jay Kaplan and Kary Moss of the ACLU of Michigan, Allan Gilmour, the former president of Wayne State University, vice chair of Ford Motor Co. and an out gay man with extensive business leadership experience in southeast Michigan, and other business owners. No transgender people were allowed to testify – despite the fact they were at the center of the controversy over an inclusive bill.

The Commerce Committee adjourned without a vote, and Speaker Bolger declared amending the state's civil rights act dead. But Bolger's religious freedom bill got a hearing two days later in the House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Speaker-elect Kevin Cotter, a tea party aligned Republican who counts among his allies Rep.-elect Gary Glenn, the former head of the American Family Association of Michigan. Glenn is part of a trio of extreme right wing politicos to be sworn in for two year terms on Jan. 1. The trio includes Glenn, Todd Courser and Cindy Gamrat.

Bolger's team has blamed "leftists" for the failure to amend the civil rights act – but BTL has reported previously that is not really the case. Gender identity and expression were not issues on the table or horizon for the Speaker and his cohorts this past spring when talk of amending Elliott-Larsen ramped up. But then, Jim Murray, president of AT&T Michigan, started going "off script" from the Michigan Competitive Workforce Coalition and encouraged lawmakers to support legislation that expanded civil rights protections only to the LGB community while dropping the T community. Murray himself has referred to being attacked by "leftists" over this move. He removed himself from participation in the workforce coalition after his own employer, AT&T, announced it would only support a fully inclusive bill.

No Gay Cakes

When Bolger announced the religious freedom bill – officially known as the Michigan Restoration of Religious Freedom (MiRFRA) – he said that businesses should not refuse to hire LGBT people, but that they should be able to refuse to bake a cake for a gay wedding. That was, he said, religious freedom and freedom of conscience.

The legislation however is much broader than simply refusing to bake a cake. Under this law, a baker who participates in Christian Identity, a religious system used by extreme racists to support their white supremacy, could refuse to bake a cake for an interracial couple's wedding. A paramedic could refuse to provide emergency medical care for a transgender person. And because Rep. Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor) attempted to amend the bill on the House floor to include a provision exempting genital mutilation from religious freedom protections – and the GOP rejected that amendment – if this bill becomes law, a young woman can have her clitoris cut off in the name of "sincerely held religious beliefs."

This is the same legislative language that forced Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer to veto a similar bill in that state. And Kansas, despite having lost in the legislature, is preparing to bring a new version of the bill in that state. The Kansas Senate stopped the bill in the prairie state this year.

And in Michigan, Senate Majority Leader Randy Richardville (R-Monroe) appears to be the barrier on this legislation in the super majority controlled state senate. In a Nov. 12 story in the subscription-only capitol newsletter Gongwer, Amber McCann – who did not return multiple calls from Between The Lines – said the leader had no personal "desire or need" for a broad religious exemption. He had earlier told Gongwer that he would have to scrutinize any bills sent over with such

See License To Discriminate, page 15

Civil Rights Amendment Dead, Says Speaker

Religious Protection Bill Advances, Would Protect Right To Discriminate

BY TODD HEYWOOD

LANSING – House Speaker Jase Bolger (R-Marshall) says legislation to amend Michigan's civil rights act to include protections for the LGBT community is dead.

"The Speaker and I have both been quoted saying the Elliott-Larsen amendment bill will not be voted on this year because there isn't enough support to get the bill out of committee," says Bolger's spokesman Ari Adler.

The bills were given a hearing Dec. 3 before the House Commerce Committee. The Committee heard testimony for an hour and a half, then adjourned without voting either of two bills to amend the civil rights act to the floor for a vote. One bill would be fully inclusive of the LGBT community, while a second, promoted by Bolger, would have excluded gender identity and expression from protections. Bolger claims transgender people are protected from discrimination under federal court rulings – something attorney Jay Kaplan of the ACLU of Michigan has said is untrue.

Meanwhile, a second bill to create a Michigan Religious Freedom Restoration Act – which would allow people to discriminate based on "sincerely held religious beliefs" – was voted out of the House Judiciary Committee on Dec. 4 where the full House passed the MiRFRA bill 59-50, falling directly on party lines.

"We are extremely disappointed by both the House Judiciary committee's action and the Speaker's statement. Speaker Bolger has stated on numerous occasions that he thinks LGBT discrimination is wrong and he has it within his power and authority as Speaker to advance the ELCRA bill to the full House for a vote. We urge him to do so, consistent with his stated beliefs. It's the right thing to do for Michigan," said ACLU Attorney Jay Kaplan.

Bolger held a press conference a couple of weeks ago to announce the Religious Freedom legislation in conjunction with a non-inclusive Elliott-Larsen amendment bill. He said the Religious Freedom legislation was designed to balance rights in Michigan. He declined at the time to tie bar the legislation to Elliott-Larsen. Tie barring is a legislative move that requires two or more bills to be passed together in order for one or the other to advance.

"At no time has the Speaker talked about tying the bills together," said Adler. "He stated today in committee that he is saddened that the path for Elliott-Larsen was closed yesterday but that MiRFRA should continue on its separate path as it, too, is important."

Responding to MiRFRA moving out of the House Judiciary Committee, Kaplan said the bill is both unnecessary and very dangerous."Religious freedom is fundamental and is protected by both our U.S. and state constitutions. However, that religious freedom does not give a person the right to justify harming others. This broadly and poorly written law allows individuals to use their religious beliefs as an excuse to discriminate and to ignore laws that the rest of us follow," stressed Kaplan. "This measure would open a Pandora's Box of lawsuits challenging any law, policy, government decision or regulation that an individual believes conflicts with their religious exercise."

Equality Michigan Executive Director Emily Dievendorf talked about how if MiRFRA were to become law it could deny Michiganders access to services by government officials, people could be turned away from a business or evicted from their home simply because of who they are. "House Bill 5959, the so-called 'Religious Freedom Restoration Act,' is unnecessary, and Michigan citizens don't want to see it become a reality. Religious leaders and victim advocates agree, if this bill becomes law, it will provide licenses to discriminate to people who decide that anti-discrimination laws, child abuse laws and domestic violence laws do not apply to them."

"Rep. Kevin Cotter has shown his true colors today and foreshadowed the type of behavior we can expect from his tenure as Speaker of the Michigan House," said Lonnie Scott, executive director of Progress Michigan. "Michigan residents have been clear that they want equality for everyone in our state and instead Republicans are moving to enshrine discrimination into state law." This was Cotter's first act after being elected as the new House Speaker.

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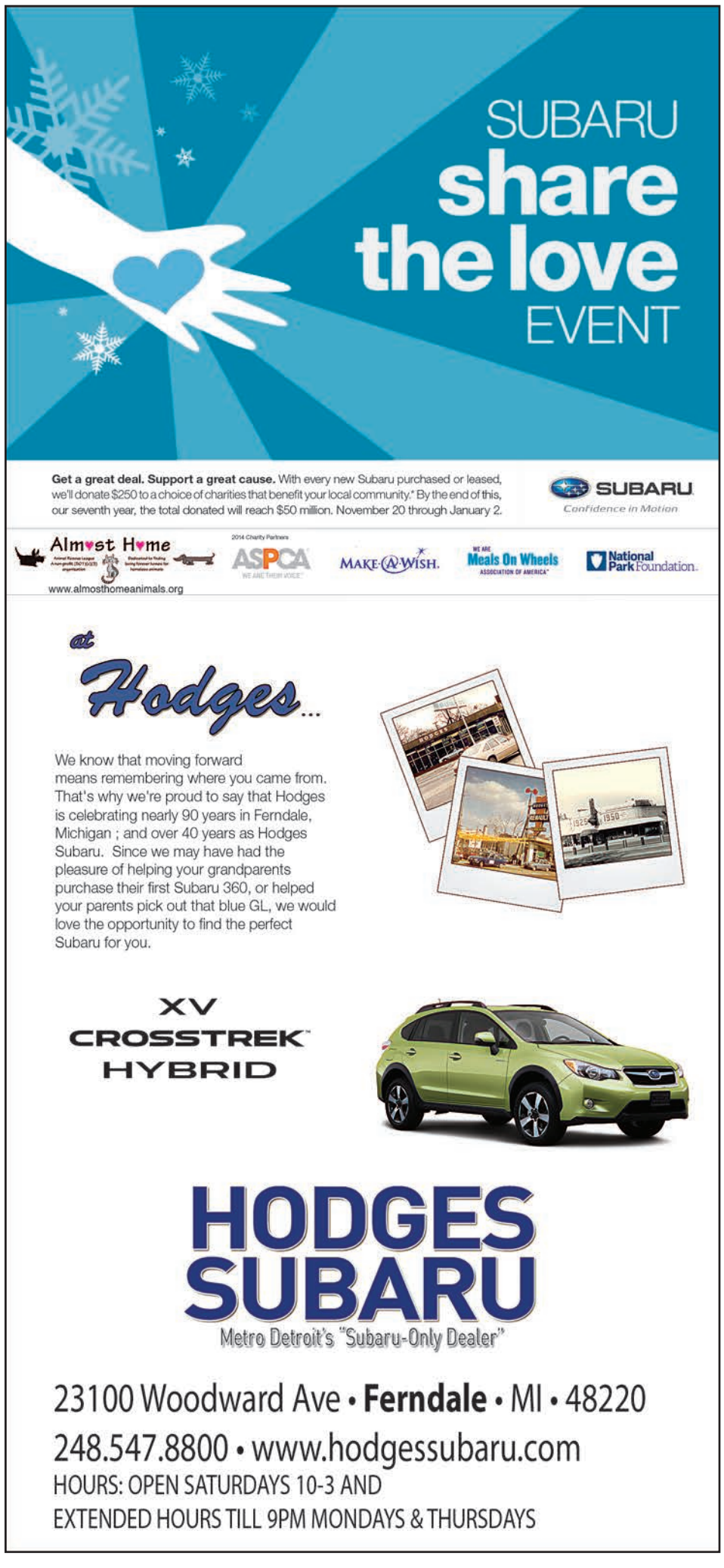
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COMPLERA is a prescription medicine for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood. COMPLERA can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements. COMPLERA combines 3 medicines into 1 pill to be taken once a day with food. COMPLERA should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines.

Just the one for me

COMPLERA is a complete HIV-1 treatment in only 1 pill a day.

Ask your healthcare provider if COMPLERA may be the one for you.

Pill shown is not actual size.

COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS.
To control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses you must keep taking COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if you have questions about how to reduce the risk of passing HIV-1 to others. Always practice safer sex and use condoms to lower the chance of sexual contact with body fluids. Never reuse or share needles or other items that have body fluids on them.

It is not known if COMPLERA is safe and effective in children under 18 years old.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

COMPLERA can cause serious side effects:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis),** which is a serious medical emergency. Symptoms of lactic acidosis include feeling very weak or tired, unusual (not normal) muscle pain, trouble breathing, stomach pain with nausea or vomiting, feeling cold especially in your arms and legs, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Serious liver problems.** The liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and fatty (steatosis). Symptoms of liver problems include your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice), dark "tea-colored" urine, light-colored bowel movements (stools), loss of appetite for several days or longer, nausea, and/or stomach pain.
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or serious liver problems** if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time. In some cases, these serious conditions have led to death. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any symptoms of these conditions.
- **Worsening of hepatitis B (HBV) infection.** If you also have HBV and stop taking COMPLERA, your hepatitis may suddenly get worse. Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider, as they will need to monitor your health. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV.

Who should not take COMPLERA?

Do not take COMPLERA if you:

- **Take a medicine that contains:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV), carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Epitol), oxcarbazepine (Trileptal), phenobarbital (Luminal), phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek), rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin), rifapentine (Priftin), dexlansoprazole (Dexilant), esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo), lansoprazole (Prevacid), omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid), pantoprazole sodium (Protonix), rabeprazole (Aciphex), more than 1 dose of the steroid medicine dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate, or the herbal supplement St. John's wort.
- **Take any other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection,** unless recommended by your healthcare provider.

What are the other possible side effects of COMPLERA?

Serious side effects of COMPLERA may also include:

- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood tests to check your kidneys before starting treatment with COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems, or take other medicines that may cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may also check your kidneys during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes.** Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms: feeling sad or hopeless, feeling anxious or restless, have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself.
- **Changes in liver enzymes:** People who have had hepatitis B or C, or who have had changes in their liver function tests in the past may have an increased risk for liver problems while taking COMPLERA. Some people without prior liver disease may also be at risk. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Bone problems,** including bone pain or bones getting soft or thin, which may lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicines.
- **Changes in your immune system.** Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any new symptoms after you start taking COMPLERA.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, and depression. Other common side effects include vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), and pain. Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?

- **All your health problems.** Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis virus infection.
- **All the medicines you take,** including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist. Do not start any new medicines while taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.
- **If you take rifabutin (Mycobutin).** Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
- **If you take antacids.** Take antacids at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA.
- **If you take stomach acid blockers.** Take acid blockers at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after you take COMPLERA. Ask your healthcare provider if your acid blocker is okay to take, as some acid blockers should never be taken with COMPLERA.
- **If you are pregnant** or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn baby. Tell your healthcare provider if you become pregnant while taking COMPLERA.
- **If you are breastfeeding** (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed. HIV-1 can be passed to the baby in breast milk. Also, some medicines in COMPLERA can pass into breast milk, and it is not known if this can harm the baby.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information with **important warnings** on the following pages.

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tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg tablets

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Brief Summary of full Prescribing Information
COMPLERA® (kom-PLEH-rah)
(emtricitabine 200 mg, rilpivirine 25 mg, tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300 mg) tablets

Brief summary of full Prescribing Information. For more information, please see the full Prescribing Information, including Patient Information.

What is COMPLERA?

- **COMPLERA** is a prescription medicine used as a complete HIV-1 treatment in one pill a day. COMPLERA is for adults who have never taken HIV-1 medicines before and who have no more than 100,000 copies/mL of virus in their blood (this is called 'viral load'). Complera can also replace current HIV-1 medicines for some adults who have an undetectable viral load (less than 50 copies/mL) and whose healthcare provider determines that they meet certain other requirements.
- COMPLERA is a complete regimen and should not be used with other HIV-1 medicines. HIV-1 is the virus that causes AIDS. When used properly, COMPLERA may reduce the amount of HIV-1 virus in your blood and increase the amount of CD4 T-cells, which may help improve your immune system. This may reduce your risk of death or getting infections that can happen when your immune system is weak.
- **COMPLERA does not cure HIV-1 or AIDS.** You must stay on continuous HIV-1 therapy to control HIV-1 infection and decrease HIV-related illnesses.
- **Ask your healthcare provider about how to prevent passing HIV-1 to others.** Do not share or reuse needles, injection equipment, or personal items that can have blood or body fluids on them. Do not have sex without protection. Always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood.

What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?

COMPLERA can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Build-up of an acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis can happen in some people who take COMPLERA or similar (nucleoside analogs) medicines. Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. Lactic acidosis can be hard to identify early, because the symptoms could seem like symptoms of other health problems. **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms which could be signs of lactic acidosis:**
  - feel very weak or tired
  - have unusual (not normal) muscle pain
  - have trouble breathing
  - having stomach pain with nausea or vomiting
  - feel cold, especially in your arms and legs
  - feel dizzy or lightheaded
  - have a fast or irregular heartbeat
- **Severe liver problems.** Severe liver problems can happen in people who take COMPLERA. In some cases, these liver problems can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Call your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms of liver problems:**
  - your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice)
  - dark "tea-colored" urine
  - light-colored bowel movements (stools)
  - loss of appetite for several days or longer
  - nausea
  - stomach pain
- **You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female, very overweight (obese), or have been taking COMPLERA for a long time.**
- **Worsening of Hepatitis B infection.** If you have hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection and take COMPLERA, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking COMPLERA. A "flare-up" is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. COMPLERA is not approved for the treatment of HBV, so you must discuss your HBV with your healthcare provider.
  - Do not run out of COMPLERA. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your COMPLERA is all gone.
  - Do not stop taking COMPLERA without first talking to your healthcare provider.
  - If you stop taking COMPLERA, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly to check your HBV infection. Tell your healthcare provider about any new or unusual symptoms you may have after you stop taking COMPLERA.

Who should not take COMPLERA?

Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any of the following medicines:

- **Medicines used for seizures:** carbamazepine (Carbatrol, Equetro, Tegretol, Tegretol-XR, Teril, Epitol); oxcarbazepine (Trileptal); phenobarbital (Luminal); phenytoin (Dilantin, Dilantin-125, Phenytek)
- **Medicines used for tuberculosis:** rifampin (Rifater, Rifamate, Rimactane, Rifadin); rifapentine (Priftin)
- **Certain medicines used to block stomach acid called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs):** dexlansoprazole (Dexilant); esomeprazole (Nexium, Vimovo); lansoprazole (Prevacid); omeprazole (Prilosec, Zegerid); pantoprazole sodium (Protonix); rabeprazole (Aciphex)
- **Certain steroid medicines:** More than 1 dose of dexamethasone or dexamethasone sodium phosphate
- **Certain herbal supplements:** St. John's wort
- **Certain hepatitis medicines:** adefovir (Hepsera), lamivudine (Epivir-HBV)

Do not take COMPLERA if you also take any other HIV-1 medicines, including:

- Other medicines that contain tenofovir (ATRIPLA, STRIBILD, TRUVADA, VIREAD)
- Other medicines that contain emtricitabine or lamivudine (ATRIPLA, Combivir, EMTRIVA, Epivir, Epzicom, STRIBILD, Trizivir, TRUVADA)
- rilpivirine (Edurant), unless you are taking rifabutin (Mycobutin)

COMPLERA is not for use in people who are less than 18 years old.

What are the possible side effects of COMPLERA?

COMPLERA may cause the following serious side effects:

- **See "What is the most important information I should know about COMPLERA?"**
- **New or worse kidney problems, including kidney failure.** Your healthcare provider should do blood and urine tests to check your kidneys before you start and while you are taking COMPLERA. If you have had kidney problems in the past or need to take another medicine that can cause kidney problems, your healthcare provider may need to do blood tests to check your kidneys during your treatment with COMPLERA.
- **Depression or mood changes. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms:**
  - feeling sad or hopeless
  - feeling anxious or restless
  - have thoughts of hurting yourself (suicide) or have tried to hurt yourself
- **Change in liver enzymes.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus infection or who have certain liver enzyme changes may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening liver problems during treatment with COMPLERA. Liver problems can also happen during treatment with COMPLERA in people without a history of liver disease. Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your liver enzymes before and during treatment with COMPLERA.

- **Bone problems** can happen in some people who take COMPLERA. Bone problems include bone pain, softening or thinning (which may lead to fractures). Your healthcare provider may need to do tests to check your bones.
- **Changes in body fat** can happen in people taking HIV-1 medicine. These changes may include increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the main part of your body (trunk). Loss of fat from the legs, arms and face may also happen. The cause and long term health effect of these conditions are not known.
- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider if you start having any new symptoms after starting your HIV-1 medicine.

The most common side effects of COMPLERA include:

- Trouble sleeping (insomnia), abnormal dreams, headache, dizziness, diarrhea, nausea, rash, tiredness, depression

Additional common side effects include:

- Vomiting, stomach pain or discomfort, skin discoloration (small spots or freckles), pain

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

- These are not all the possible side effects of COMPLERA. For more information, ask your healthcare provider.
- Call your healthcare provider for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking COMPLERA?

Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including:

- If you have or had any kidney, mental health, bone, or liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if COMPLERA can harm your unborn child.
  - There is a pregnancy registry for women who take antiviral medicines during pregnancy. The purpose of this registry is to collect information about the health of you and your baby. Talk to your healthcare provider about how you can take part in this registry.
- If you are breastfeeding (nursing) or plan to breastfeed. Do not breastfeed if you take COMPLERA.
  - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
  - Two of the medicines in COMPLERA can pass to your baby in your breast milk. It is not known if this could harm your baby.
  - Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements:

- COMPLERA may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how COMPLERA works.
- If you take certain medicines with COMPLERA, the amount of COMPLERA in your body may be too low and it may not work to help control your HIV-1 infection. The HIV-1 virus in your body may become resistant to COMPLERA or other HIV-1 medicines that are like it.
- Be sure to tell your healthcare provider if you take any of the following medicines:
  - Rifabutin (Mycobutin), a medicine to treat some bacterial infections. Talk to your healthcare provider about the right amount of rilpivirine (Edurant) you should take.
  - Antacid medicines that contain aluminum, magnesium hydroxide, or calcium carbonate. Take antacids **at least 2 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA.
  - Certain medicines to block the acid in your stomach, including cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), nizatidine (Axid), or ranitidine hydrochloride (Zantac). Take the acid blocker **at least 12 hours before or at least 4 hours after** you take COMPLERA. Some acid blocking medicines should never be taken with COMPLERA (see "Who should not take COMPLERA?" for a list of these medicines).
  - Medicines that can affect how your kidneys work, including acyclovir (Zovirax), cidofovir (Vistide), ganciclovir (Cytovene IV, Vitrasert), valacyclovir (Valtrex), and valganciclovir (Valcyte).
  - clarithromycin (Biaxin)
  - erythromycin (E-Mycin, Eryc, Ery-Tab, PCE, Pediazole, Ilosone)
  - fluconazole (Diflucan)
  - itraconazole (Sporanox)
  - ketoconazole (Nizoral)
  - methadone (Dolophine)
  - posaconazole (Noxafil)
  - telithromycin (Ketek)
  - voriconazole (Vfend)

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of all your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine. Do not start any new medicines while you are taking COMPLERA without first talking with your healthcare provider.

How should I take COMPLERA?

- Stay under the care of your healthcare provider during treatment with COMPLERA.
- Take COMPLERA exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to take it.
- Always take COMPLERA with food. Taking COMPLERA with food is important to help get the right amount of medicine in your body. A protein drink is not a substitute for food. If your healthcare provider decides to stop COMPLERA and you are switched to new medicines to treat HIV-1 that includes rilpivirine tablets, the rilpivirine tablets should be taken only with a meal.

Keep COMPLERA and all medicines out of reach of children.

This Brief Summary summarizes the most important information about COMPLERA. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider. You can also ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for information about COMPLERA that is written for health professionals, or call 1-800-445-3235 or go to www.COMPLERA.com.

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IN FOCUS

First Trans Helpline In USA Is In Michigan

BY AJ TRAGER

As reported this week by the Advocate, a new trans lifeline began taking calls in November and claims to be the first in the U.S. However, the transgender helpline provided by Transgender Michigan (TGMI) has been offering services long before 2014.

Transgender Michigan was started 17 years ago. Co-Founder Rachel Crandall noticed that there was a need for a helpline for individuals to call and get help, to be heard or to just come out to an understanding ear.

"I noticed that a lot of people were in crisis, had problems and had no one to talk to," Crandall said. "It was the first transgender helpline in the country. And there's never been another one until right now. They are starting one in San Francisco. So, it's one of the many ways that Michigan was far ahead of the rest of the country."

Today the Michigan hotline is answered by three individuals who take calls from Michigan, the rest of the country and as far away as Dubai.

"It's not weird that we get a call from someone who says, 'I've never told it to anyone else in the world, however, I am a transexual.' So very often we are the very first person that someone ever says that out loud to," Crandall said.

With the addition of the Californian hotline, the country now has two numbers for the transgender community to utilize for help and support. Crandall would like to see more of these services pop up around the country so that trans individuals have a place to call in their specific region, if not their own state.

National statistics have long stated that transgendered individuals are twice as likely to be unemployed, with more than 40 percent reporting that they are underemployed and are subject to wage inequities, lack of legal protections, the inability to update identity documents, unequal access to health insurance benefits and denial of personal medical leave.

But aside from employment discriminations, the transgender community faces higher rates of suicide, rejection by family and friends, discrimination, victimization and violence, the Williams Institute reports. A nationwide survey by transgenderlaw.org (http://www.transgenderlaw.org/resources/transfactsheet.pdf) found that from 1985 to 1998, 20 percent of all murders and 40 percent of all police-initiated violence was against a trans person, 85 percent reported physical or emotional abuse for their gender identity and close to half of trans women and men are without health insurance.

Many things have changed since the 90s and statewide and federal policies are expanding to include trans protections and rights, but America has a long way to go before it reaches full equality for all people.

"What's so exciting for me is that every caller is a little different," Crandall said. "Two callers may feel alike, however, we are all very very different. And I find that exciting. We never know what we're going to get. It really keeps me on my toes."

A big part of the work for Crandall is how rewarding it is for her and her team. Transgender Michigan will continue to work in Michigan and promote other trans services because the more people who are served, the more lives that are potentially saved.

"We really want to make sure the quality of the helpline is as high as it can be. We actively listen, empathize and help the caller make the decision (to come out) themselves."

Between Bass And Treble: An Alto Story

BY AJ TRAGER

Celeste McClellan-Zmich (L) and Barbara Zmich-McClellan (R) pose for a photo for BTL in their Ypsilanti home. Their minature Schnauzer, Tuko, while very much a part of the family, is not pictured. BTL Photo: AJ Trager

YPSILANTI – Amidst the cobblestone roads and waterways of Dusseldorf, Germany, Barbara Zmich-McClellan and Celeste McClellan-Zmich met while working in the instrumental arts. They kept running into one another throughout Europe at various functions or coffee houses.

"There was something; there was just this moment where I thought, 'This is the person I'm going to spend the rest of my life with,'" Barbara said.

Thirty-one years later, the couple celebrated their anniversary on Dec. 4 here in the United States, with wine from Vinology, chocolate from Schakolad and a re-polishing of their wedding rings from Abracadabra where they originally purchased them, all located in Ann Arbor.

Both musicians play in what is considered the alto clef, located between the treble and the bass clefs on the music scale, which allows them to move in the middle and work as a connective force in an orchestra.

"Alto is so neat because you bridge upper and lower clefs," Celeste said.

"Sometimes we'll play our parts together to see how things fit in and pace our stamina," Barbara added. "We don't often have a lot of melody where we are. We provide a lot of rhythmic support and sometimes we'll get some fantastically cool melodies. If that voice is brought out, it brings a lot of seniority that otherwise you might miss. It adds a lot to the body of the orchestra."

Barbara began playing the viola in her Birmingham middle school and Celeste began her French horn study around the same time in her home state of Texas. While in Europe, they played for large orchestras like the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, the Dutch Radio Orchestra and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Today they both work as freelance performers for various groups around the state, Barbara contracted with the Ann Arbor Symphony and the Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra and Celeste performing with the Dodworth Saxhorn Band, the Ann Arbor Symphony and the Christ Church Grosse Pointe.

"It's really exciting to play with the Ann Arbor Symphony because sometimes you'll just get those moments where things will happen in a performance that you don't anticipate are going to happen," Barbara said. "It's everybody getting into a mental groove, and it's really thrilling and the audience picks up on that."

The couple was married at Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts, and for the first time since they said their vows, they will take the stage together in an upcoming performance by the Ann Arbor Symphony.

Thirty-one years later, the couple celebrated their anniversary on Dec. 4 here in the United States, with wine from Vinology, chocolate from Schakolad and a re-polishing of their wedding rings from Abracadabra where they originally purchased them, all located in Ann Arbor.

"It's an amazing thing to be able to play music at such a high level that you can play professionally and make your living off of it," Barbara said. "We played in full time orchestras in Europe, and when we came back we decided that we didn't want to do that anymore. But we still wanted music to be a big part of our lives."

They lived together in Europe for a total of 12 years before returning to the U.S. and say that living in very open, LGBT-friendly cities like Amsterdam helped to establish a good foundation for their identities and their relationship. In the Netherlands, a couple, or any two people, sharing household expenses and a residence under the same roof are granted all the rights and benefits as a couple who are legally married.

"I had a hard time adjusting to the different culture when I came back," Celeste said.

"The big thing for me coming back was health insurance, because they had fantastic health insurance. It's not an issue at all. We think America is so progressive, that we are such an advanced culture, but their culture has been around a lot longer than ours and they really have figured a lot of things out that we haven't figured out yet," Barbara said.

After moving back to the states, Barbara and Celeste pursued applied powers of attorney, joining trust accounts and estate planning, and years later in September of 2013, they married.

"In the arts, it (prejudice or discrimination of LGBT people) tends to be less so than in corporate America," Celeste said. "I've never felt like that, even in Holland. But one of my colleagues in Holland did make a rude comment to me as I was getting on the bus. You never know where it is going to come from. It could come from enlightened peoples, those who know other gay people."

In January, they will travel to Japan for a 26-day tour, playing 14 concerts with the Hollywood Festival Orchestra, accompanying three Japanese singers. Barbara and Celeste started learning the Japanese language earlier this year during a trip they took out west and are excited to travel abroad again to play with other musicians from around the globe.

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Therapist Discusses Sexualities Of LGBT And Straight Men In New Book

BY AJ TRAGER

In his latest book, "Is My Husband Gay, Straight or Bi?," certified relationship therapist and clinical sexologist Joe Kort, PhD, MSW, MA, with the help of Alexander P. Morgan, PhD, illustrates diverse male sexuality and how every experience from childhood onward affects personalities, and for some, their sexual appetites. Designed as a self-help book for wives concerned about their husbands' physical engagements with other men, Kort and Morgan describe a range of seemingly gay entanglements and how the stigmatization of homosexuality, the dangers of learned homophobia and the deep psychological segregation between "gay," "straight" and "bi" affect male sexuality. Kort has written three other books addressing the lives of gay men and the importance of affirmative therapy vs reparative therapy, and this guide follows those same principles of "seek to fully understand where your partner is coming from and address their needs." With the help of case studies and descriptions of various relationship styles and how to improve intra-relationship communication skills, Kort and Morgan show male sexuality as a fluid experience, keeping a thick distinction between gay men and men who have sex with other men.

As a gay man and sexual therapist for over 20 years, Joe Kort offers workshops for couples and singles, run various therapy groups, teaches at the University of Michigan's Sexual Health Certificate Program, speaks and conducts workshops internationally and maintains and contributes to blogs, magazines and newspapers. In a recent interview with BTL, Kort describes the challenges in writing the self-help guide for concerned wives and the differences in LGBT and straight therapy.

You've been in practice since 1985. What would you say is the biggest change in therapeutic approach for the LGBT community since you started?

The biggest change I have noticed is that LGBT people in their teens and early 20s are coming to me with regular problems, not (just) related to being LGBT. The coming out process occurred earlier for them, and they didn't need therapy. So by the time they come to me they just have mainstream problems such as relationships, family issues and depression and anxiety. I noticed the change in the early 2000s and was pleasantly surprised.

What motivated you to write this book?

I decided to write "Is My Husband Gay, Straight, or Bi?" because I have been seeing an increase of straight men who were caught by their wives looking at gay porn and putting ads on and answering Craig's List ads for sex with men. I wanted to provide a book that was a resource for these men and women, for them as a couple, to not let it destroy their relationships.

What was the most difficult aspect of writing this book?

There are two things that made this book difficult to write:
1. Writing about bisexuality. There are so many ways of expressing bisexuality that it was hard to write about. Writing that out in a clear way was a challenge for both myself and my writer. I think I did an OK job, but it could have been better.

2. Perhaps the hardest thing for me to get used to is the bashing I get from gay men who attack me for writing that a straight man can have gay sex. They claim that I am keeping closeted gay men in the closet and reinforcing a false belief that they are straight. The difference is that, for the gay or bi guy, he moves onto a gay or bisexual identity whereas the straight guy never does. I always say that straight men who have gay sex is a guy thing, not a gay thing.

What hurdles does the LGBT community face that their straight counterparts do not in terms of sexual health?

Because our sexual orientation and behaviors are not heteronoramtive, we deal with a lot of shame. I see a lot of shaming of each other about how we engage in sex. Amongst gay men there is quite a bit of judgment around what other gay men do in terms of open relationships, bathhouses and being on gay apps like Grindr. There is an increase of sexual liberation and freedom as well. It has always been there, but I see more LGBT people enjoying the fact that there are no sexual expectations of us and we get to make our own rules of what is healthy or not for ourselves.

Is there one thing you can suggest to a broad group of LGBT people on how to be more in tune with their sexual self?

It is imperative that LGBT people examine the injuries and insults they experienced while growing up. Even if you are someone who never experienced gay bashing directly, listening to the news, the media, those in your family who are LGBT-negative goes directly into your psyche and shapes your developing sense of self as an LGBT person. We were born LGBT children. We don't arrive here from a gay planet and infiltrate the straight world. Most of us come out and move on as if coming out in and of itself is enough. It is not. Looking at the dust bunnies left in that closet is imperative.

"It is imperative that LGBT people examine the injuries and insults they experienced while growing up. Even if you are someone who never experienced gay bashing directly, listening to the news, the media, those in your family who are LGBT-negative goes directly into your psyche and shapes your developing sense of self as an LGBT person."

You can reach Joe Kort at 248-399-7317. Email him at joekort@joekort.com or check out his website @ www.joekort.com.

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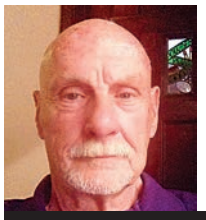


OPINION BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

'Twas New Years Eve and Santa Closet – lavender quill pen in hand, Gucci trifocal sunglasses on his merry nose – was double checking his private list to see who's straight, and who's – hopefully, er, – gay.

Unbeknownst to almost everybody – the exceptions: Christmas Carol and a near-retirement elf named Crisco – Santa Closet, who usually goes by Claus 363 days, felt entitled to party. Solo.

Mrs. Claus, who hadn't slept with her hubby since bubble lights and artificial tinsel trees broke family values tradition, couldn't care less that she'd have one less mouth to feed on New Year's day at the North Pole.

Forty elves, the usual party-crashing, fur-lined eskimos and those caterwauling chipmunks were enough for Mrs. Claus. She was frankly tired of hearing another round of travel adventures. Boring. (Especially those concerning the Middle East.) Year after year.

"It's my only pleasure," she hummed to herself, taking freshly baked Alice B. Toklas gingerbread cookies from the oven. "Especially without that flighty Rudolph poking around where he shouldn't be. That wet-nosed sniffer is a bit much. Heaven knows what my Nicky sees in him."

Truth is, it was Rudolph, with his shiny nose so bright, that put Claus into the Closet; but, to be fair to the antlered, addled-headed kid, it was all Santa's doing. He bought the bouncy, happy-go-lucky, sky-dancing critter from Gene Autry, the singing cowpoke who ranched and raised Rudolph from a young'n.

Story is that Autry, who met Santa at a Rodeo Ho-Ho-Ho-down, suspected Santa might take to Rudolph, if for no other reason than Rudolph's sled-mates-to-be each had questionable, funny names. Dasher. Prancer. Comet. Cupid. Vixen. ("Vixen, indeed!" twanged Autry.)

It was probably a big mistake from the start to let Rudolph lead Santa's team. But, let's face it. That nose so bright. Well, fellow consumers, chalk it up to conspicuous consumption. And – a real plus – the nose did match Santa's red outfit. But Santa was pleased as pink holiday punch. Especially as he recalled ten Christmases ago. It was Santa's last stopover at Palm Springs, Calif., the gift-giving, oasis-in-the-desert, party drop off before hula-hula, grass-skirt Hawaii. Like everybody else who's overworked, Santa was plumb pooped from under-pricing and tamper-proof Walmart packaging.

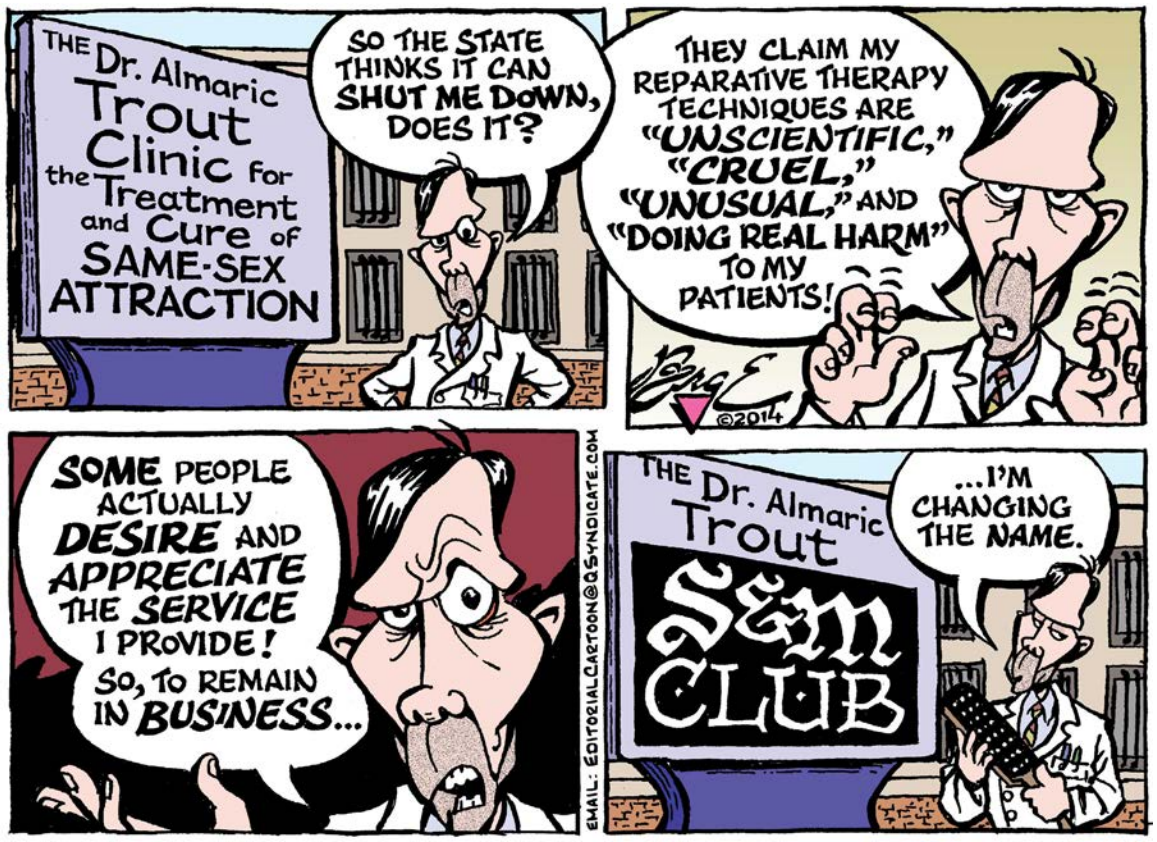
"Rudy," winked Santa, in need of a perk up, "use your twinkle nose. Find us a spot where I can get a quickie hot toddy. Or, two." No sooner said than done, Rudolph to the Rescue, attracted by the distant clarion call of that old favorite carol "Jingle Bell Rock" blaring through the star filled night, set Santa's sleigh cozily down in an almost full-to-capacity parking lot.

"I shan't be long," said Santa, as he peeped into the red-and-green, bright neon-lighted bistro. Bruce's Cell Block Cafe & Tackle Lounge. "Keep an eye on Dancer and Prancer. And, whatever you do, Rudy, don't let Vixen out of your sight!"

"Hey, mister, whoever you are in that Santa get up, we've got rules here," barked a rather burly, unshaven guy guarding the joint. "No leather. No go!" Santa, ever jolly, quick of wit, grinned, "Hey, Mikey, you remember me. I brought you a Barbie doll for Christmas when you were ten."

"O Shingles!" said pink-faced Mikey, taken aback. "You really are Santa. Beats tarnation and tarp out of me. Go on in. Your leather belt'll do. If anybody asks, it was Kenny – not Barbie – I wanted."

Three hot toddies later Santa was on his way. Cheery like all get up. All get out. "You know somethin', Rudy. I've been lettin' the wrong age and dress code sit on my lap. Oh, well, it's never too late to be naughty and nice. Why's Vixen gigglin'? You two been decking the halls of parking lot holly?"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No One's Mister Sister

OPINION BY GWENDOLYN SMITH

Kate Pierson, long a member of the seminal new wave group the B-52s, is releasing a new album called "Guitars and Microphones" in early 2015 – and has recently released the first single. The song – a catchy tune with a great beat and memorable hook – is what one might expect from an artist known for hits dating back to the late 1970s.

While I am a long-time audiophile with hundreds of vinyl records and compact discs to my name – not to mention MP3s and other digital releases – this column is not a music review. While it is as solid a track as one might expect for a musician with Kate Pierson's pedigree, it's the lyrics of this tune that raise an eyebrow.

The song in question is named "Mister Sister," a title that should already raise some red flags for many who are transgender. Pierson herself has high hopes for the track, telling the Huffington Post, "I hope it becomes a trans anthem, but it's really meant to empower anyone who feels 'betrayed by the mirror.'"

Much like reducing transgender people to someone "betrayed by the mirror," the lyrics read like a virtual smorgasbord of transgender cliches and tropes. For example, lines about "They make you play with toy soldiers" or "You raid her closet for fishnets." The whole song reads as a simple story of someone who escapes the tribulations of their life to blossom into "Debbie Delicious" and end up on "everyone's party list."

Then there's the chorus: "You hear the words, 'You make a beautiful girl, a beautiful girl.' Nothing hurts when you're a beautiful girl, a beautiful girl." It's hard to take this in any way seriously given that a whole lot of things can hurt for transwomen, "beautiful" or otherwise – and to make such a light message of this all feels hollow at best.

Now I'm not expecting something deep out of a pop song, and there's decades of vapid, cliched tunes out there. Honestly, it would be silly to expect great depth on such a song. I do, however, expect that when someone claims their tune is a "trans anthem" that it not be quite so problematic.

For one, this "trans anthem" seems blind to anything but male-to-female identities. You'll find no equally cliched lyrics about young transmen getting stuck with Barbie dolls or trying on their dad's ties. There's nothing beyond a fairly simple notion of transforming into that "beautiful girl."

At the same time, I can hardly say that the tune treats male-to-female gender identities in a very affirming fashion – and that starts from the very title of the song. "Mister Sister" sounds like "She-Male" or "He-She," both of which are considered offensive by many in the transgender community. Likewise, lines about digging in closets for fishnets make this sound like artifice, not identity; a disguise one is putting on to end up on those party lists.

I cannot talk about the song, too, without discussing the video. It largely features Kate singing the song against a white background, as well as comedian Fred Armisen and a small number of others including Alyson Palmer.

See Mister Sister, next page

► Mister Sister

Continued from p. 14

Armisen, known for being on "Portlandia" and "Saturday Night Live," spends much of the video admiring various items of traditional feminine attire, including some large drop earrings and a slinky, too-small red dress. The others mime into mirrors, spread makeup on their faces or simply dance about.

As another transgender activist notes, the inclusion of Alyson Palmer is also problematic, given her response to transgender activists who called for a boycott of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival in 2013. I doubt Palmer's inclusion was a deliberate slap in the face of these transwomen and others, and was likely because she is probably a friend of Pierson and wanted to lend her support and have some fun in front of the camera.

This has been a year where great divisions have crept up between the transgender movement and drag culture. The battle over "RuPaul's Drag Race" and their use of "She-Male" on the show – and RuPaul's vehement defense of it and the phrase "Tranny" – still sting for many. Both sides of this particular kerfuffle are not yet willing to give the other much ground.

This song may do a lot to reignite this debate, intentional or not. The inclusion of Palmer in the video will also inflame people still angry over the continuing issues with the MWMF. In short, a "trans anthem" that treats transgender people as those who only want to be called a "beautiful girl" and be on party lists is no anthem at all.

This is the problem with the whole track in a nutshell. I feel as if everyone was, in their own way, well-meaning. I suspect that Pierson wrote a catchy anthem and used what she felt she knew about trans people to fill in the lyrics. I really do feel she did this with good intentions, but lacked even the foresight to think that maybe some of her choices were bad ideas.

I'm not going to say that Pierson should have left making a "trans anthem" to, oh, actual transgender people. You don't have to be transgender to understand where we're coming from. Yet you cannot pen an anthem without at least understanding those you are supposedly writing it for.

This has been a year where great divisions have crept up between the transgender movement and drag culture. The battle over "RuPaul's Drag Race" and their use of "She-Male" on the show – and RuPaul's vehement defense of it as the phrase "Tranny" – still sting for many.

The song itself, musically, isn't bad. At best, she may have made a great song for the drag community, replacing some very scratchy old recordings of "We Are Family" in the process. Heck, lyrically the song could work well in drag circles.

It is not, however, in any way a trans anthem.

Gwen Smith thinks Laura Jane Grace could be an anthem writer. You can find Gwen on twitter at @gwenners.

► License To Discriminate

Continued from p. 4

exemptions because he had heard concerns the language could be misused.

Emily Dievendorf, executive director of Equality Michigan, is holding out hope that Richardville will be the dike that holds back the religious exemption wave. She worked closely with the Monroe Republican while she was on the staff of former State Rep. Andy Coulouris.

"Senator Richardville is a faithful Catholic who believes strongly in religious freedoms as do most Michiganders – Democratic or Republican, gay or straight," Dievendorf said in a text message Monday. "Richardville's office has already acknowledged that additional religious protection is unnecessary to protect those freedoms. Michigan citizens agree that our state and U.S. Constitution have us covered and a RFRA would only open the door to harm against our most vulnerable."

Meanwhile, with amending the civil rights act essentially a dead deal in the state legislature this session, Freedom Michigan's expenditures on a significant ground force of 24 field organizers is done. Freedom Michigan was a coalition of national LGBT organizations that formed to educate the public. On Sunday, those field organizers were all laid off. The money to fund those organizers was provided by HRC in Washington D.C. To top it off, with the state house likely to become significantly more conservative in the next legislative session, MiRFRA will likely be on the agenda – and Richardville will be gone from the Senate, having fallen to term limits. That is going to put Michigan in the legislative crosshairs, and the likelihood of passage of MiRFRA is nearly certain. The question is, can the LGBT and ally community build the opposition infrastructure to encourage Gov. Rick Snyder enough to prevent him from signing such legislation into law?

Creep of the Week

Stacy Swimp

OPINION BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

LGBT people aren't covered under Michigan's anti-discrimination law. Meaning you could, for example, be fired for being gay and your employer would be perfectly in his or her rights. Your legal recourse would be, to use a technical term, jack shit.

Stacy Swimp

For a minute it looked like that might change. The Michigan House was poised to vote on a bill to add sexual orientation (but not gender identity) to the law. The Commerce Committee heard testimony about the bill, including the testimony of Stacy Swimp, president of the National Christian Leadership Council.

Before he began speaking, he promised to shorten his remarks so that he would not "regurgitate" what others had already said during the hearing. "Regurgitate" was an excellent word choice since his words were basically ignorant hate vomit.

"This proposed legislation is yet another step in the assault on religious freedom," Swimp began. "I ask the Commerce Committee today, and the Michigan legislature, can you begin to clearly define sexual orientation? Do you truly know what you are potentially aligning yourselves with?"

Swimp doesn't attempt to answer these questions, though I can't help but guess that he has some sinister picture in his mind of lesbian sister wives triple-gay-marrying during a Wiccan handfasting ritual.

He says that protecting LGBT people from discrimination has "resulted in Christian churches, pastors and church members being discriminated against, fired, fined, expelled from school and pressured to violate their conscience and moral opposition to homosexual marriage and homosexual behavior itself."

In other words, if we protect the queers, then there would be consequences for discriminating against them and such discrimination is a sacred right for Christians.

As examples he uses Julia Ward, an Eastern Michigan University student who was expelled from the counseling program after she refused to council a gay kid on the grounds that her religion forbade her from treating gay people like human beings deserving of compassion. He also refers to Crystal Dixon, fired from the University of Toledo after writing an anti-gay op-ed in the Toledo Free Press. Both of these women, as he makes sure to mention, are black.

Which is important because civil rights are only for black people, obviously.

"As a minister of the Gospel, and as a black American whose parents participated in the Freedom Rides — my ancestors were slaves in plantations in the state of South Carolina, Arkansas, Tennessee, Indiana and Mississippi — I (sit) here today rather offended."

As he should be! I mean, who wouldn't be offended while recounting his family's direct connection to our nation's deep racist history? Not to mention the continued oppression of people of color in America.

Ah, but that's not what he's talking about. He's talking about the comparison between "gay rights and black civil rights."

"Lesbian, homosexual, bisexual and transgender Americans have never been denied their voting rights, nor have they been denied the right to assemble," he continues. "No one from the LGBT community has ever had fire hoses turned on them by the police department, they have never had to drink out of an LGBT water fountain. There is no public record of LGBT (people) being forced to sit at the back of the bus in an LGBT section. Black Americans were publicly lynched and specifically excluded from moving into neighborhoods, prohibited from sitting on a jury and denied the right to sue others."

In other words, if we protect the queers, then there would be consequences for discriminating against them and such discrimination is a sacred right for Christians.

I doubt he sees the irony in mentioning being denied the right to sue considering he is, in fact, arguing that LGBT people should continue to be denied the right to sue for discrimination. But he is right – the black civil rights movement and the LGBT civil rights movement have been different in some ways and the treatment of black people in this country has been deplorable and continues to be.

But using that history as evidence to support discrimination against gay people is wrong. Swimp apparently thinks that civil rights are a rare commodity and there just aren't enough to go around; he's pitting black people and LGBT people against each other as if there is no overlap between the two groups.

There's a whole lot of hate to go around in this world. More than enough. If no one is free while others are oppressed, those who want a pass to oppress others are in a jail of their own making.

LGBT Baby Boomers Face Tough Retirement Hurdles

BY KEN SWEET

NEW YORK (AP) – For Kathy Murphy, the difference between being gay or straight is $583 a month.

Retirement should have been a "slam dunk," the 62-year-old Texas widow says. She saved, bought a house with her spouse and has a pension through her employer.

But Murphy's golden years have not been as secure as they should have been. She is missing out on thousands of dollars a year in Social Security benefits simply because she was married to a woman, not a man.

Murphy fell into a loophole in Social Security that denies survivor benefits to same-sex couples depending on what state they live in. Had Murphy and her wife, Sara Barker, lived next door in New Mexico, a state that does recognize same-sex marriage, this wouldn't have been an issue.

"If I had been straight, getting widow's benefits would have been a slam dunk," Murphy says. "I never thought I would live to see same-sex marriage, but the government still minimizes my marriage and my relationship of 32 years."

Murphy could be thought of as just one of the many baby boomers who are not prepared for retirement. But while the group overall is not ready to stop working, gay boomers face challenges that make them even more vulnerable, experts say.

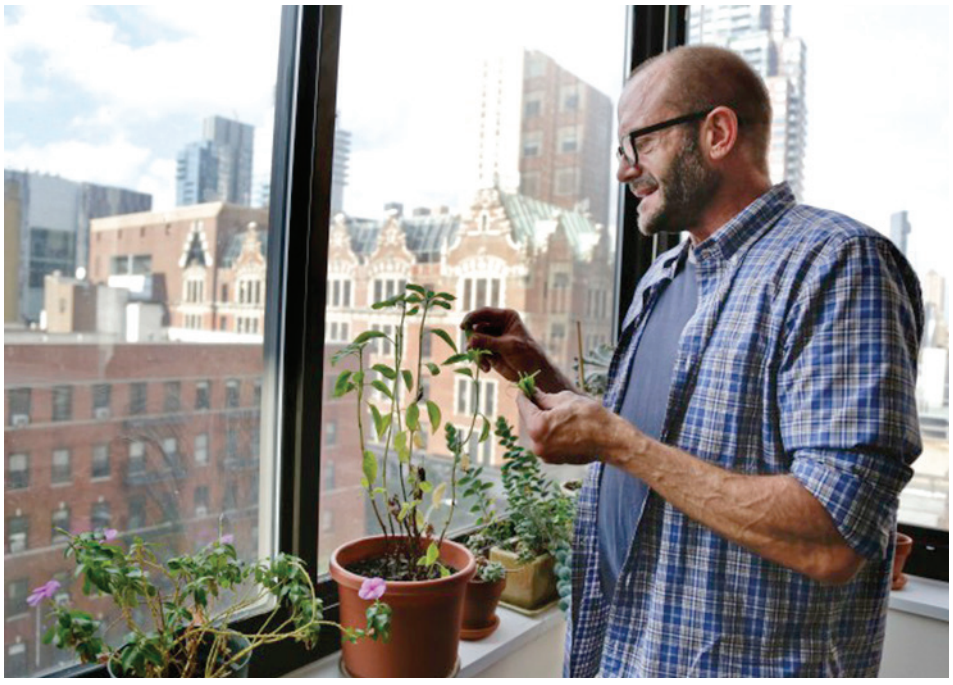
For many, decades of workplace discrimination impaired their earning power. The AIDS crisis caused lasting financial and psychological damage, particularly for gay men. And legal pitfalls within Social Security, the cornerstone in any senior's financial planning, have left gay boomers ill-equipped for retirement.

Same-sex couples in general are likely to have saved far less for retirement than their straight counterparts, according to an exclusive analysis of the Federal Reserve's Survey of Consumer Finances by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. The center is jointly operated by The Associated Press and NORC, a leading research center at the University of Chicago.

The median retirement savings for a same-sex couple is roughly $66,000, while straight married couples have roughly $88,000, according to the data, which looks at the finances of straight and same-sex couples aged 19 to 95 going back to 2001.

This data, as well as other studies, show that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults tend to be poorer, in worse health, and most often, alone – with no family to care for them when they reach old age.

"In the aging world, there has been little regard for even the existence of LGBT older people, let alone their particular social and financial needs," says Michael Adams, executive director of SAGE, a national organization focused on social services and advocacy for LGBT seniors.



In this Oct. 16 photo, Jim Albaugh picks basil leaves from a plant in his window while cooking dinner at the west side Manhattan apartment that he shares with two roommates in New York. Albaugh could be thought of as just one of the working poor, untold millions in the baby boomer generation who are not prepared for retirement. But he represents something more as one of thousands of gay and lesbian baby boomers confronting a retirement of greater financial hardship than his straight peers. AP Photo Julie Jacobson

When financial firm Prudential asked LGBT adults aged 25 to 68 last year if they were "well prepared" for retirement, only 14 percent said they were, compared with 29 percent of the total population.

And in a sad irony, many of the aging pioneers of gay rights are too old to reap the retirement benefits from the marriage laws they championed.

Lower Earnings

Gays and lesbians have faced higher unemployment, lower wages and a workplace where discrimination based upon sexual orientation was common. While many corporations have non-discrimination policies now, it is still legal to fire someone for their sexual orientation in 21 states according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

Two polls, one by Pew Research in 2013 and one by Gallup in 2012, reached the same conclusion: LGBT individuals were more likely to make less money than their straight peers during their careers. Gay men earned as much as 32 percent less than straight men, according to research by the Williams Institute, a California-based think tank that focuses on LGBT issues.

As a result, gay men and women over 65 are more likely to end up in poverty. Lesbians, who face wage discrimination because of both their gender and sexual orientation, are even more vulnerable.

Being LGBT "just amplifies the financial problems women already face in the workforce," says Ineke Mushovic, executive director of the Movement Advancement Project, a Denver-based LGBT-focused think tank.

The Gallup poll found that 15.9 percent of gay men over 65 were near or below the Federal poverty line, compared to 9.7 percent of heterosexual men in the same age group. While the Gallup poll showed poverty rates for straight and gay women to be statistically similar, other studies, including a 2009 report by the Williams Institute, showed lesbian couples over the age of 65 were twice as likely to live below the poverty line as opposite-sex couples, and were much more likely to be on public assistance programs such as food stamps.

Married Without Benefits

Gay couples were only recently extended the core elements of the retirement safety net available to married straight couples: inheritance of a spouse's Social Security benefits and pensions. But even with the recent expansion of gay marriage, same-sex couples still face discrimination when it comes to benefits.

When a husband or wife in a straight marriage dies, their spouses can typically collect Social Security benefits based on the higher earner's work history. Not so for many gay spouses. Only widows or widowers in states that recognize same-sex marriage can get that higher income.

Why? Social Security differs from most federal programs in that the law requires it to use individual states' definition of marriage. That requirement is why the Obama Administration was unable to extend Social Security benefits to all same-sex couples nationwide, even after the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act last year. Before then, the federal government did not recognize same-sex marriage at all, even in states where it was legal. Domestic partnerships are still unrecognized by the federal government.

In Florida, Arlene Goldberg faces a retirement of significantly less income. When her partner of 47 years, Carol Goldwasser, died in March, Goldberg was denied her wife's Social Security survivor benefits on the basis that Florida does not recognize same-sex marriage.

Goldwasser's death certificate said "single, never married," even though the couple wed in New York in 2011. Had they been living in New York, Goldberg would earn $800 more in monthly benefits.

"The Social Security problems were bad, but the fact they listed Carol as single was the worst possible thing they could have done to me," Goldberg says.

The State of Florida revised Goldwasser's death certificate in October to recognize the couple's marriage, but Goldberg still has not received any Federal benefits.

"The Social Security Administration knows this is a problem, but there is little they can do, because they're bound to the letter of the law," says Karen Loewy, a senior attorney at Lambda Legal, a national organization that focuses on legal issues affecting the LGBT community.

In the case of Murphy and Baker, the couple got married in Massachusetts in 2010. Baker died in 2012, and since then Murphy has been unable to collect her wife's benefit of $583 a month. Same-sex marriage has been legal in Massachusetts since 2003, but it's not allowed in Texas, and the federal government is required to use the couples' state of residence to determine benefits.

"I try not to worry about money, but it's about fairness," Murphy says.

This isn't the first time state marriage laws and Social Security have been at odds. The denial of benefits to mixed-race couples was cited by the Supreme Court in 1967 when it struck down laws that barred black and whites from marrying. For gay couples, the state laws

See Boomers, next page

► LGBT Boomers
Continued from p. 16

that block federal benefits amount to similar discrimination, advocates say.

Government agencies have little understanding of the scope of problems facing the LGBT demographic. The Administration on Aging, part of the Department of Health and Human Services, collects data on aging minority groups such as African Americans, Native Americans and Hispanics, but not on gay individuals. This is important because the federal government allocates money toward specific elderly programs based on these surveys.

The White House has called for legislation to allow same-sex couples to access survivor benefits in all states. It also has asked for an update of the Older Americans Act to authorize data collection on LGBT individuals. However, there has been little momentum in Congress to take up these issues.

"We're not talking about some fringe benefit here," says SAGE's Adams. "Social Security is the most important financial resource for older Americans in this country, and this is just as true for LGBT older Americans."

The Shadow Of AIDS

Bill C. was never supposed to reach retirement. Diagnosed with HIV in the late 1980s, he spent three years in and out of hospitals with AIDS-related infections, watching helplessly as dozens of his friends died.

The 67-year-old, who did not want his last name used for fear his HIV status would negatively impact his acting career, chose to live for what moments he thought he had left. He cashed in his retirement savings and bought a waterfront home on Long Island he knew he couldn't afford. There he thought he'd spend his days sailing, fishing and riding horses until the disease took him.

He nearly died a handful of times, spending much of 1995, 1996 and 1997 in the hospital. He had to shutter his fabric business.

And the dream house where he was supposed to live out the rest of his life? It was taken by the bank in 1995.

Like Bill C., many long-term AIDS survivors interviewed by the AP talked about poor financial decisions they made in the 1980s and 1990s – when they believed they were facing a death sentence – and are now paying for as they enter retirement.

The advent of life-prolonging antiretroviral "cocktail" therapies in the late 1990s helped end that fatalistic outlook, but by then, HIV-positive baby boomers had lost a decade or more of savings time. Those who had cashed in their retirement funds had to start saving again. Those who had AIDS-related infections went on workplace disability, stunting their savings potential.

"A lot of people who had jobs and financial resources before they became sick were then

Texas resident Kathy Murphy (left) is suing the federal government for spousal benefits after the death of her wife, Sara Barker (right), in 2012.

stuck in some relatively permanent status of financial disarray," says Sean Strub, the founder of POZ, a New York-based magazine focused on the HIV-positive community.

Jim Albaugh is one of these people.

Diagnosed with HIV in 1987, then AIDS in 1990, Albaugh was in and out of hospitals. But after coming back from the brink of death, he faces a different crisis: He can't work as much as before he was sick and has little savings.

When the 55-year-old former actor does save, "something pops up and it's gone." Recently, he says, he was "lucky" to buy a new pair of shoes. Without the public support programs that help him with his New York City rent, he would not be able to get by.

Albaugh has 10 years before he hits retirement age. But when asked about it, he says: "I don't think about retirement because I don't believe I will have one."

He can't work as much as before and has fallen behind on saving for retirement.

"I was working 40 hours a week and I ended up twice in the hospital," he says. "It took me a long time to realize I couldn't work as much as I really wanted."

Albaugh hopes to wean himself off some public aid programs in the next couple of years but acknowledges that he'll need others, like Social Security disability.

"I'll work as hard as I can until I can work no more. After that," he says, his voice trailing off, "I don't know what I will do."

MICHIGAN RESOURCES

LGBT Older Adult Coalition

>> http://lgbtolderadults.com

The website has a SE Michigan Rainbow Resource Guide for Older Adults and Caregivers

For more information, contact Project Director Kathleen LaTosch at 248-812-9202 or email klatosch@gmail.com.

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Lesbian Judge To Speak At Ann Arbor Interfaith Service

BY BTL STAFF

U.S. District Judge Judith Levy, one of only seven openly gay federal jurists in the nation, will discuss her remarkable journey at the First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor for the fifth annual "Interfaith Service of Affirmation" for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals (LGBT) and their families, friends and allies.

Her keynote address and the following reception are scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 16. UUAA is located at 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Road, at the corner of Ellsworth. The event is free and open to the public.

"I am planning to talk about my personal story," she said, "why I think diversity on the bench matters if we are to have a meaningful justice system, and a little on why we can be hopeful about the future."

Levy, 56, who is celebrating her 29th anniversary with Janet Johnson, married her partner last summer in a civil ceremony in Washington, D.C. They have three children: Rianna, a sophomore at Yale, and twins Micah and Kayla, juniors at Pioneer High School.

Levy was confirmed in a 97-0 vote of the U.S. Senate last summer even though she has been a gay rights activist for most of her adult life and has followed a career path that could have put her in conservative Republican cross-hairs.

> *"Your entire life is laid bare in what the Senate Judiciary Committee seeks, including everything you have ever said in public or written. I'm thankful that my nomination did not become a political issue."*
>
> - U.S. District Judge Judith Levy

"I was nervous," Levy said. "Your entire life is laid bare in what the Senate Judiciary Committee seeks, including everything you have ever said in public or written. I'm thankful that my nomination did not become a political issue."

"I've been very fortunate," she added.

A University of Michigan graduate, Levy worked at University Hospital, where she served for six years as bargaining chair for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. After getting her law degree from U of M in 1996, she spent four years as a trial attorney for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, specializing in civil rights cases.

Levy became an assistant U.S. Attorney in 2000 and was chief of its civil rights unit from 2010 until her appointment to the bench.

She has also been an adjunct professor of law at U of M since 2000.

The service of affirmation will include a group blessing of same-sex couples who have been able to marry as well as those who wish to be.

Music will be provided by Katie Geddes, Kath Weider Roos, Laz Slomovitz, David Vaughn, Lori Fithian, Jean Chorazyczewski and Brandy Sinco.

In addition to UUAA, the event's co-sponsors include: Beth Israel Congregation, Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, First Congregational United Church of Christ of Ypsilanti, First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor, Jim Toy Community Center, Interweave at First UU of Ann Arbor, Lord of Light Lutheran Church, Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network, OASIS TBLG Outreach Ministry, Rainbow Crossing of the First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor, Shining Lakes Grove, ADF, Saint Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church and Trinity Lutheran Church.

Read more about the service's musical line-up in BTL's previous piece on the event, "Tidings of Comfort & Justice." (www.pridesource.com/article.html?article=69223) That and other Ann Arbor events can be seen on Pridesource's "Neighborhoods" page.

INFO

Religious & Spiritual

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>> www.PrideSource.com

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WAIT WAIT ... DO TELL ME!

Comedian Paula Poundstone Talks Sex, Tech & Cats

BY CHRISTOPHER TREACY

For decades now, Paula Poundstone's been the subject of sexual speculation. Wherever you stand on that debate, one thing's certain: The comedian's not getting any from anyone.

Speaking before her gig on Dec. 13 at the Royal Oak Music Theatre, Poundstone says, "I don't talk about sex a lot because I don't actually have sex, and my act is largely autobiographical."

Is sex too messy?

"I think so, yes – it's very messy," she concedes. "It involves much more work than I'm willing to put out. The idea that I'd go to my room after everything else I go through in a day and that there'd be someone *in* my room that might expect something like that from me – I just can't even."

And trust her – she's had enough practice to know. "I did some experimenting early on, enough to know I'm right," she continues. "Sometimes I marvel at the rest of you; I think, 'Wow, they must have nothing else going on in their lives.'"

I ask if it's possible that maybe this is all just a defensive cover-up and that, deep down, she would secretly love to wake up and face each day with a companion. Or, perhaps she has one that she's kept hidden all these years.

No dice. And no procreation, either.

"Jesus, no. Not at all," Poundstone says. "I really just think I'm more of a rational thinker than others. We don't need more people on this earth. Is it helping get things done? No! It's not helping with global warming. It's not helping deal with water shortages and drought."

I reluctantly confess I'd been hoping for more of a breakthrough, and we have a good laugh about what an audacious, delusional thought that is.

But despite this, Poundstone has a very active nurturing instinct. In keeping with her feelings about procreation, she became a foster mom in the early '90s, helping upwards of a dozen needy kids and eventually permanently adopting three. The youngest, Thomas, 16, lives with her and their 15 cats – another sign of her need to nurture.

Still, in her own self-deprecating way, she's quick to let you know that it's all much more than she bargained for.

"I do not in any way advocate a large cat census; they're a pain in the ass," she advises. "You discover somewhere along the way that you're an 'animal caretaker' not an 'animal lover' – I'm not sure there's any love in it at all! It's the seedy underbelly of having pets. I'm an idiot and it's totally my fault."

With regard to her son, the humor comes with a grain of salt ... we hope.

"It's so hard – you simply wouldn't believe it. I wanted to take care of him, yes, but I'm bitter nonetheless … because we're finished with that phase and he's still here," she jokes.

Her tone shifts to something more genuine when we discuss her feelings about the Internet, which, it turns out, she feels is about as productive as sex. And perhaps with good reason: the almighty web is the root of current problems with her son.

"He has an electronics addiction, so he's not allowed to use the computer at all," Poundstone says. "He really is an addict in the classic sense – the craving, the lengths he'll go to. I think the whole world is in denial about this problem. Most people live with electronics addicts and don't realize it, or they won't blow the whistle because they're too close to it themselves."

Poundstone noticed her son's compulsion a few years ago and says it's been terribly difficult to "get a hold on it" because the world of psychology isn't emphasizing electronics addiction in this country. In China, she says, it's considered the No. 1 threat to youth and cultural well-being.

On a recent flight to Chicago to tape NPR's "Wait Wait … Don't Tell Me," a news quiz show for which Poundstone is a regular contestant, she sat beside a communication studies professor heading to an academic conference in the Windy City.

"She told me that the most common fear people have in their daily lives now is one-on-one communication," Poundstone says. "We've gotten very used to hiding behind these devices. Personally, I want to be able to look people in the eye, shake their hand, stand beside them ... and I love making people laugh. But it's best in a crowd – waves of laughter, shared experience. That's the part of comedy that's so healthy."

INFO

Paula Poundstone

7:30 p.m. Dec. 13
Royal Oak Music Theatre
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HoliGAY Giving

Affirmations Offers Opportunities To Help Those In Need

BY SHELBY CLARK PETKUS

Affirmations is conducting two special projects this holiday season to benefit local LGBTQ and allies in need. One of the projects, "We Are All One Family," has been created for those looking for a meaningful way to offer support to a family, as the program is designed to assist low-income LGBTQ and ally-identified families.

According to Affirmations, "The end-of-year season is often filled with tremendous generosity and joy, but it can also be challenging for many families that are in need. There are programs that exist to ensure a happy year-end season; however, identifying as an LGBTQ family often results in no longer being eligible for many of these programs."

Families and those in need were selected earlier this month. For any further questions or concerns on those needing help, contact Syeda Davidson at sfhdavidson@gmail.com. All participants have been contacted prior to gift-giving.

The options for area LGBTQ and allies to participate are the following:

- Be the person willing to purchase gifts or a meal depending on the request. Volunteers will then be matched with one of the identified families and provided with details about that family.
- Sign up to help wrap gifts at Affirmations on Dec. 13.
- Sign up to help deliver the gifts between Dec. 21-24.

Affirmations urges all reading to participate, be it anonymously or more publicly, noting, "If you choose to participate anonymously and not communicate with the family directly, then all purchases will need to be dropped off at Affirmations on Saturday, Dec. 13. Due to limited storage capacity at the center, we ask that items only be dropped off on this date." They ask that all LGBTQ and allies please consider making a difference in someone's life this season by being part of the much-needed program. For more information on "We Are All One Family," contact Davidson at sfhdavidson@gmail.com or Jon Fitzgerald at JFitzgerald@goaffirmations.org.

For those unsure of the time or service they can offer, Affirmations is also hosting their Second Annual Holiday Wish List Drive. The Volunteer Development Committee at the community center is looking for help to collect coats, mittens, gloves, hats and other items on the wish list for Affirmations' Youth Program. Items can be dropped in the box near the front desk at the center.

Affirmations is located at 290 W. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. More information on the center and its projects can be found at www.goaffirmations.org.

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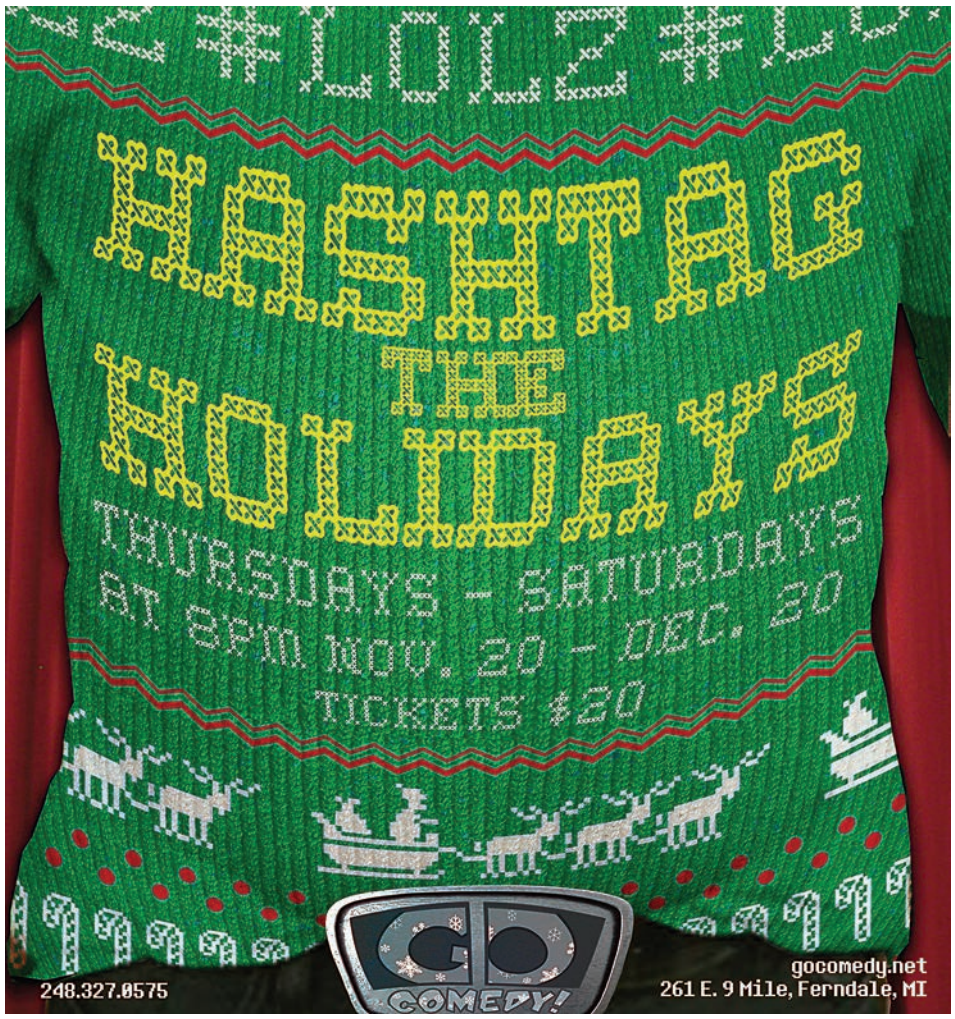

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Slipstream Does Shakespeare

BY JOHN QUINN

Slipstream Theatre Initiative's inaugural production, "The Winter's Tale," continues through Dec. 31 at Michigan Actors Studio. Photo: STI

"A sad tale's best for winter."

So says young Mamillius, heir to the throne of Sicilia and character in William Shakespeare's romance, "The Winter's Tale." "Out of the mouths of babes ..." they say. Except Mamillius doesn't say that line, or any other line, in Slipstream Theatre Initiative's reinvention of Shakespeare's story. He's still a babe in arms.

That's one of the more minor alterations in Bailey Boudreau's adaptation. This performance script is a lean abridgement, shedding scenes and characters to focus on the core story. Spoiler alert: Shakespeare kills Mamillius off in Act III, Scene ii; Boudreau would have him spirited off to prosper in anonymity only to emerge to claim his birthright. "The Winter's Tale" is considered a comedy; how better to assure "And they all lived happily ever after" than by assuring us "And they all lived?"

"The Winter's Tale" concerns the intertwined fates of the royal houses of Sicilia and Bohemia, but we might just as well start, "Once upon a time in a faraway land ..." King Leontes of Sicilia (Steve Xander Carson) has been hosting a state visit from his childhood companion, Polixenes of Bohemia. Polixenes (Ryan Ernst) has stayed nine months and really needs to get home to his throne. Leontes is unwilling to see the party end, so he implores his queen Hermione (Luna Alexander) to apply a little sweet talk. She's too successful – seeing his wife and best friend so "familiar," Leontes literally snaps. In short order he accuses his wife of adultery, sends a loyal retainer, Camillo (Graham Todd), to poison Polixenes, and orders his newborn daughter to be abandoned in the wilderness.

Camillo instead warns Polixenes and spirits the Queen and her children to – of all places – rural Bohemia. Paulina (Jaclynn Cherry), a woman loyal to the Queen, tells the tyrant that his entire family is dead.

"The Winter's Tale" jumps 16 years to find a scandal in Bohemia (take that, A. Conan Doyle!). Polixenes' heir, Florizel (Ryan Ernst, now playing his previous character's son), is courting a beautiful shepherdess named Perdita (Luna Alexander – do you sense a pattern here?) who is, of course, the newborn from the first act, grown to womanhood. Madness is healed, identities revealed, fidelity is rewarded and "They all lived . . ." etc., etc.

I'm not casting stones when I describe "The Winter's Tale" as "Shakespeare Lite." Bailey Boudreau is directing his adaptation, and really knows how to tell the story. But, consider that in my Howard Staunton edition of the "Complete Works," "The Winter's Tale" is 66 pages long. This show runs about an hour and a half. "Antony and Cleopatra" is 67 pages long in the collection and Shakespeare in Detroit's March production ran a tad over three hours. One may conclude, then, that a lot of text has been jettisoned. Is that a bad thing?

It won't please the diehard Shakespearean devotee. And, truth be told, a lot of brilliant material hit the cutting-room floor. The editing, though, has produced a nimble, accessible text that neatly wraps up the core story while still observing The Bard's themes.

"A Winter's Tale" is a counterbalance to "Othello"; two noble men, guilty of the deadly sin of jealousy, bring ruin on themselves and those around them. The difference, of course, is that Leontes repents. Saved from damnation by faithful servants (and 16 years of purgatory), Leontes is redeemed; Othello is doomed.

This production of "The Winter's Tale" might be described as "bohemian." It is performed at the Michigan Actors Studio in Ferndale with minimal set, lights and costuming. Shakespeare performed in full regalia can end with the technical aspects distracting from the drama. I quote again a college professor from my callow youth: "One goes to the theater not to *see* Shakespeare, but to *hear* Shakespeare."

Aye, there's the rub. The performance space is a two-story-high cavern, and lot of dialogue is lost in the rafters. Soliloquies, too, are lost; a character talking to him or herself is never really alone – the audience has to be in on the "conversation."

Noticeable in line deliveries is a tendency to actively break the meter of Shakespeare's poetry. On the upside, it makes the dialogue more conversational and thus more modern. On the downside, it interferes with the audience's interpretation of the text. These plays are playable 400 years later because the playwright knew exactly where to place the accents – on the key words of the text. Resistance is futile; Shakespeare wins every time.

A "winter's tale," to an Elizabethan, is one in the tradition of folk tales everywhere: rather outlandish, superficial; something tossed out to while away the dark hours of long, cold winter nights. The Starks are right – "winter is coming." I guess the nearest modern equivalent to legends around the hearth is organizing our Netflix stream. There are alternatives to "Game of Thrones" binges. Michigan Actors Studio is toasty, the audience affable, the fare entertaining. Just bundle up for the drive so you won't freeze your winter's tail.

REVIEW

The Winter's Tale

Slipstream Theatre Initiative
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Happenings

OUTINGS

Thursday, Dec. 11

Holiday Bazaar The charity is collecting new toys, clothing and other gifts to distribute during its third annual Holiday Bazaar. For The Seventh Generation, **Multiple.** 313-529-1813. www.Fortheseventhgeneration.org

Friday, Dec. 12

EVolution @ The AFF Cafe, Store & More 6:30 p.m. POETRY NIGHT featuring Rose Mare ONE SINGLE ROSE WILSON, JOHN TRIMBLE and WRITER L. BUSH. Open mix - bring your A game - sing, recite poetry, tell some jokes, dance. We are looking for a co-host and will be holding open auditions. Suggested donation $3-$5 benefiting the artists and The Aff Stores food donations. Organization Name, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale.** 248-398-7105. jwtct@aol.com www.Goaffirmations.org

Holiday House Party 7 p.m. Ann Arbor LGBTQA Young Professionals' Social Meetup, 401 Snyder Ave., **Ann Arbor.** www.Meetup.com/Ann-Arbor-LGBTQA-Young-Professionals-Social-Meetup/events/

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: Reform School Girl - When juvenile delinquent Vince gets in trouble with the cops, loyal gal-pal Donna takes the fall and ends up in a training center for troubled ladies. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale.** 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org/

Celebrate Christmas with the Langsford Men's Chorus 8 p.m. Tickets: $12-15. Langsford Men's Chorus, 2600 Harvard, **Berkley.** www.LangsfordMensChorus.org

Saturday, Dec. 13

Holiday in December Gala 6 p.m. Celebrate the holiday in sexy silver and black. Tickets: $75-140. KICK, 33 E. Forest Ave., **Detroit.** www.E-kick.org

Own Your Gender 7 p.m. The Network, 343 Atlas Ave. SE, **Grand Rapids.** 616-458-3511. www.Grlgbt.org

Paula Poundstone 7:30 p.m. Tickets: $29. 50. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., **Royal Oak.** 248-399-2980. www.Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Heidi Grant Murphy and Menahem Pressler 8 p.m. Tickets: $15-30. Chamber Music Society of Detroit, 22305 W. 13 Mile Road, **Beverly Hills.** 248-855-6070. www.Chambermusicdetroit.org

LCC GSA Drag Show 8 p.m. The LCC Gay Straight Alliance is proud to present our annual Drag Show. The esteemed Kathie Dunbar will serve as our Mistress of Ceremony. Proceeds will help fund the Gay Straight Alliance throughout the semester. Special thanks to First Congregational United Church of Christ of Grand Ledge (an affirming place to worship for the holidays) for sponsoring snacks at the performance. Contact GSA Adviser John Stratton at strat2@lcc.edu for tickets. Tickets: $5-10. Lansing Community College Gay Straight Alliance, 500 N. Capitol Ave., **Lansing.** strat2@lcc.edu www.Lccgsa.org

W. E. T 10 p.m. W. E. T, 315 Braun Ct., **Ann Arbor.** 734-994-3677. wetannarbor@gmail.com www.Facebook.com/events/359901910855068/

Sunday, Dec. 14

L2L Book Club 2 p.m. Lansing Lesbians - L2L, 2820 Towne Cenre Blvd., **Lansing Charter Township.** www.Meetup.com/Lansing-Lesbians-L2L

Transitions 2 p.m. Free transgender support group. Transitions, 1055 E. South Blvd., **Rochester Hills.** 586-838-0825.

Celebrate Christmas with the Langsford Men's Chorus 4 p.m. Tickets: $12-15. Langsford Men's Chorus, 36375 Joy, **Westland.** www.LangsfordMensChorus.org

Holiday Ruth Ellis Benefit Concert 7 p.m. Suggested Donation: $10-20. One Voice Chorus, 23925 Northwestern highway, **Southfield.** 248-354-4488. www.Ruthelliscenter.org

Drag Queen Addictions 10:30 p.m. LaBelle and Aretha Franklin impersonator April Summers brings her big personality to the stage as she introduces a lineup of drag stars. 18+. Inuendo Nightclub, Corner of Nevada St. and Southbound I-75, **Detroit.** https://www.facebook.com/inuendo.nightclub?rf=118209121607517

Monday, Dec. 15

TransPeace 7 p.m. Ruth Ellis Center, 77 Victor St., **Highland Park.** 313-867-6932. www.Ruthelliscenter.org

Whole Lives, Healthy Lives Adult Support Group 7 p.m. This one-of-a-kind program in Berrien County helps attendees support each other in healthy ways through active listening and caring feedback. OutCenter, 132 Water St., **Benton Harbor.** 269-925-8330. www.Outcenter.org

Tuesday, Dec. 16

Talk Tuesdays 6 p.m. Free. KICK, 41 Burroughs St. 109, **Detroit.** 313-285-9733. www.e-kick.org

Interfaith Service of Affirmation Love & Justice 7 p.m. Interfaith Service of Affirmation for TBLGQI people and their families, friends and Allies. Theme for this annual service is Love & Justice with keynote by Honorable Judith E. Levy, recently installed as U. S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. Music by Jennifer Marshall Evens, Katie Geddes, Kath Weider Roos, Laz Slomovitz, David Vaughn, Lori Fithian and Jean Chorazyczewski. The service will include a group blessing of all the same-sex couples who were recently able to be married and of same-sex couples who still yearn to be. Followed by a reception. Free will offering for The Jim Toy Center. First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor, Inclusive Justice Together In Faith and co-sponsoring faith communities, 4001 Ann Arbor-Saline Road (corner of Ellsworth), **Ann Arbor.** 734-395-7133. mdawsonpekarek@gmail.com

Transgender Life Support 7 p.m. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale.** 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org

Wednesday, Dec. 17

Trans & Gender Queer Group 12:30 p.m. Eastern Michigan University, **Ypsilanti.** 734-487-4149. www.Emich.edu/lgbtrc

HIV/AIDS Research Colloquium 1 p.m. Cost: $20. Equality Research Center, 124 Quirk, **Ypsilanti.** 734-487-3032. equality_humanrights@emich.edu www.emich.edu/equality

Senior Koffee Klatch 1 p.m. A lively, discussion and social group for LGBT adults over 45. Group covers topics pertaining to aging and outside speakers. Potluck dinners at members homes, lunches out and holiday parties. Meets ever Wednesday on the upper level of the Affirmations building. Senior Koffee Klatch, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale.** 248-398-7105. www.GoAffirmations.org

HIV Testing 6 p.m. Free. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale.** 248-398-7105. http://www.goaffirmations.org/events/event_details.asp?id=430531

Thursday, Dec. 18

Free HIV Testing 2 p.m. Free anonymous HIV testing in-store at S3 every Thursday 2-8. Call to make an appointment, or walk-ins welcome. S3 Safe Sex Store and HARC, 1209 S. University, **Ann Arbor.** 734-741-1434. info@bak-inc.com www.S3safesexstore.com

Transgender Women of Color (TWOC) 7 p.m. Focused on embracing womanhood and developing sisterhood. TWOC, **Detroit.** 313-931-2975.

Ladies Night 10 p.m. Third Thursdays: For women who love women. Pronto Video Bar, 608 S. Washington Ave., **Royal Oak.**

Friday, Dec. 19

Piston's Pride Night Tickets: $45. Detroit Pistons, 5 Championship Dr., **Auburn Hills.** 248-377-0100. www.Palacenet.com

Mini Farmers Market 11 a.m. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., **Saugatuck.** 269-857-2399. www.Sc4a.org

Week End @ SOHO 6:15 p.m. Gay Professionals Social Group, 205 W. Nine Mile, **Ferndale.** www.Meetup.com/Gay-Professionals-Social-Group-MI

Womyn's Film Night 7 p.m. Film: The Fish Child. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale.** 248-398-7105. www.Goaffirmations.org/

Pride Friday 9 p.m. The one and only gay night. 18+. Guys with college ID get in free before 11 p.m. Cover: $5+. Necto, 516 E. Liberty St., **Ann Arbor.** 734-994-5835. www.Thenecto.com

Saturday, Dec. 20

Family Fotos Exhibition honoring all families. OutCenter, 132 Water St., **Benton Harbor.** 269-925-8330. www.Outcenter.org

Bright and Gay Cabaret 3 p.m. Winter Concert. Sistrum, 215 N. Capitol Ave., **Lansing.** www.Sistrum.org

LGBTQ-Friendly Yoga Class Just B Yoga, 106 Island Ave., **Lansing.** www.Justbyoga.com

Home for the Holidaze 12-Songwriter Showcase & Charity Drive 9 p.m. Static Network has been hosting this night of song for the past eleven years to benefit the community's homeless citizens and pets. The event brings together six local singer-songwriters in one evening of acoustic music for a good cause. The Congregation of Every 1-Local artist and philanthropist Jeff Hocking started the secular community group turned charity to help the homeless and also contribute goods to other homeless shelters for people and also animal rescue groups. 18+. Admission is $6 or $5 with one can of people or pet food or winter clothing item. Boots, blankets, socks and hats are much needed this year. Static Network, 2932 Caniff, **Hamtramck.** 313-874-0909. info@staticrecords.com www.Paycheckslounge.com

MUSIC & MORE

Classical

Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra "Holiday Pops". Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor. Dec. 13 - Dec. 12. 734-761-1800. www.A2so.com

Berman Center for the Performing Arts "The Sphinx Virtuosi". Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. 8 p.m. Dec. 13. 248-661-1900. www.Theberman.org

Chamber Music Society of Detroit "Signature Chamber Series". Seligman Performing Arts Center, 22305 W. 13 Mile Road, Beverly Hills. Sep. 20 - Jan. 17. www.Chambermusicdetroit.org

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Zarathustra!". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 12 - Dec. 13. 313-576-5111. www.Dso.org

Concerts

101 WRIF "Steel Panther". Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. Dec. 14. 248-399-2980. www.Royaloakmusictheatre.com

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Michael Feinstein". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 14. 313-576-5111. www.Dso.org

Detroit Symphony Orchestra "Home Alone with the DSO". Max M. Fisher Music Center, 3711 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 17. 313-576-5111. www.Dso.org

Ferndale Public Library "Cello-Bella Holiday Benefit Concert" Join us for a free secular holiday concert to benefit Ferndale Public Library!. Ferndale Public Library, 222 E. Nine Mile, Ferndale. 6:30 p.m. Dec. 11. 248-546-2504. www.Facebook.com/events/297092797155734/

Lansing Symphony Orchestra

See Happenings, page 30

Editor's Pick

Deck the halls with drag this weekend to support Lansing Community College's Gay Straight Alliance. The group's annual drag show will be held to help fund the GSA throughout the next school semester.

The event will be lead by the esteemed Kathie Dunbar. The First Congregational United Church of Christ of Grand Ledge is sponsoring snacks for the performance and also offers an affirming place of worship for the holidays.

The LCC GSA Drag Show begins at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 13 at Dart Auditorium, 500 N. Capitol Ave., Lansing. Tickets are $5 in advance, $10 at the door. For more information, visit www.lccgsa.org or email GSA Adviser John Stratton at strat2@lcc.edu.

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NOAH GUNDERSEN
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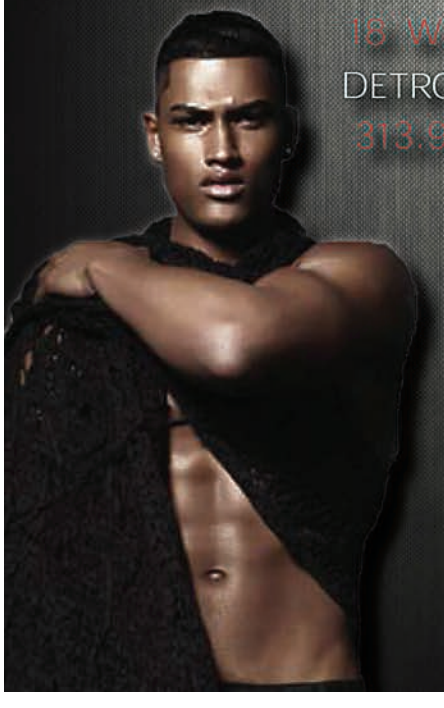

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► Happenings

Continued from p.28

"Holiday Pops" Guest Artists: MSU Youth Chorale. Side-by-Side Student Orchestra. Wharton Center for the Performing Arts, Michigan State University, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. 3 p.m. Dec. 14. 800-WHARTON. www. Whartoncenter.com

Riverwalk Theatre "Celtic Holiday" Tickets: $12. Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., Lansing. Dec. 13 - Dec. 14. 517-482-5700. www. Riverwalk.com

Sound Board - Motor City Casino "Chrisette Michelle". Motor City Casino, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. Dec. 18. 866-782-9622. www. Motorcitycasino.com

Sound Board - Motor City Casino "Chris Isaak" Holiday Tour. Motor City Casino, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. Dec. 12. 866-782-9622. www. Motorcitycasino.com

The Ark "A Johnnyswim Christmas" Tickets: $25. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 12. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Ark "Josh Shilling & Tim Shelton Perform Christmas Classics" Tickets: $15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 15. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Ark "Delbert McClinton" Tickets: $50. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 17. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Ark "Trinidad Tripoli Steel Band" Tickets: $15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 16. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Ark "The Lone Bellow w/sg Robert Ellis" Tickets: $20. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 14. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Ark "The Ragbirds Holiday Show" Tickets: $25. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 13. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Ark "Over the Rhine" Tickets: $30. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. Dec. 11. 734-761-1800. www. Theark.org

The Lansing Concert Band "Holiday Festival" Tickets: $5-12. Charlotte Performing Arts Center, 378 State St., Charlotte. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 13. 517-655-8447. www. Cpacpresents.com/boxoffice

The Magic Bag "Adrian Belew Power Trio" Tickets: $24+. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Dec. 18. 248-544-3030. www. Themagicbag.com

Other

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Real to Reel: Shoot Me - Elaine Stritch" Tickets: $5-7. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. 7 p.m. Dec. 11. 269-857-2399. www. Sc4a.org

The Acorn Theater "Street Carols & Jingle Bell Rocks". The Acorn Theater, 107 Generations Dr., Three Oaks. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 13. 269-756-3879. www. Acorntheater.com

The Berman Center for the Performing Arts "Great Expectations on Film" Dickens classic tale live from the West End on the big screen! This Jo Clifford adaptation has been universally acclaimed as a triumph on its sellout tour of the UK ahead of its West End debut. The event will form part of the global celebrations surrounding the 200th Anniversary of the Dickens birth. Berman Center for the Performing Arts, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Dec. 17 - Dec. 17. 248-661-1900. www. Theberman.org

The Magic Bag "Found Footage Festival" Tickets: $10. The Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. 8 p.m. Dec. 17. 248-544-3030. www. Themagicbag.com

THEATER

Civic/Community Theater

Irving Berlin's White Christmas $24. Grosse Pointe Theatre at Grosse Pointe War Memorial Fries Auditorium, 32 Lakeshore Road, Grosse Pointe Farms. Dec. 13 - 22. 313-881-4004. www.gpt.org

Leading Ladies $14-16. Farmington Players, 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. Through Dec. 20. 248-473-1856. www.farmingtonplayers.org

Rock n' Roll Santa $10. Spotlight on Youth at Inspire Theatre, 5767 Executive Dr., Westland. Dec. 12 - 14. 734-751-7057. www.inspiretheatre.com

Shrek, the Musical $13-24. The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre at Civic Auditorium, 329 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. Through Dec. 14. 269-343-1313. www.kazoocivic.com

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever $13. The Franke Center Children's Theater at The Franke Center, 214 E. Mansion St., Marshall. Dec. 11 - 14. 269-781-0001. www.Frankecenterforthearts.org

The Christmas Schooner $7-15. The Twin City Players at Lake Michigan College Mendel Center Mainstage, 2755 E. Napier Avenue, Benton Harbor. Dec. 19 - 21. 269-429-0400. www.twincityplayers.org

The Desk Set $15. Barefoot Productions, 240 N. Main St., Plymouth. Through Dec. 14. 734-560-1493. www.justgobarefoot.com

Editor's Pick

Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit will take audiences back into time to the J.L. Hudson's 12th floor "Toyland" in downtown Detroit for its seventh annual holiday production of "Woodward Wonderland: A Detroit Holiday Tradition." On stage at the Detroit Institute of Arts' Detroit Film Theatre Thursday, Dec. 11 to Sunday, Dec. 14, the original play brings Detroit holiday traditions to the stage, with scenes featuring Noel Night, the Thanksgiving Day Parade and ice skating in Campus Martius Park.

"This production is a true celebration of Detroit, bringing together professional caliber youth talent along with the legendary stories of the city's past and today," said Rick Sperling, Mosaic's founder. "'Woodward Wonderland' has become a holiday classic for Detroit families and those who hold a fondness for this beloved city."

Tickets ($16-32) for all performances can be purchased at the DIA box office by calling 313-833-4005.

The Neverending Story $8-12. Stagecrafters at Baldwin Theatre, 415 S. Lafayette Ave., Royal Oak. Dec. 11 - 14. 248-541-6430. www.stagecrafters.org

The Truth About the Holidays, a Musical Cabaret $30. Peppermint Creek Theatre at Miller Performing Arts Center, 6025 Curry Lane, Lansing. 7:30 p.m. Dec. 18. www.peppermintcreek.org

Professional

A Christmas Carol $19-42. Meadow Brook Theatre, 2200 N. Squirrel Road, Rochester. Through Dec. 21. 248-377-3300. www.mbtheatre.com

And The World Goes 'Round $34-36. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. Through Dec. 28. 269-343-2727. www.farmersalleytheatre.com

Annapurna $12-42. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Dec. 20. 734-433-7673. www.purplerosetheatre.org

Anne of Green Gables $20. What A Do Theatre, 4071 W. Dickman Road, Springfield. Through Dec. 20. 269-282-1953. www.whatado.org

Annie $34-69. Wharton Center for Performing Arts, 750 E. Shaw Lane, East Lansing. Dec. 16 - 21. 800-WHARTON. www.whartoncenter.com

Buzz $17-20. Detroit Repertory Theatre, 13103 Woodrow Wilson, Detroit. Through Dec. 28. 313-868-1347. www.detroitreptheatre.com

Christmas Caroled $15-32. The Encore Musical Theatre Company, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. Through Dec. 21. 734-268-6200. www.theencoretheatre.org

ComedySportz Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. 877-636-3320. www.comedysportzdetroit.com

Cornwell's Christmas Carol $42 with meal; $37 show only. Cornwell's Dinner Theatre, 18935 15 1/2 Mile Rd, Marshall. Through Dec. 20. 800-228-4315. www.turkeyville.com

Fridays and Saturdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Gift of the Magi $25-41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Dec. 21. 734-663-0681. www.pntheatre.org

Home for the Holidays $35-41. The Dio - Dining and Entertainment, 135 E. Main St., Pinckney. Through Dec. 23. 517-672-6009. www.diotheatre.com

Home for the Holidays $35. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Dec. 18 - 27. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

Improv Mondays $5 at the door. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

Invasion! $10-20. Planet Ant Theatre, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck. Through Dec. 20. 313-365-4948. www.planetant.com

It's a Wonderful Life $12-15. Great Escape Stage Company, 155 W. Michigan Ave., Marshall. Through Dec. 14. 269-781-2700. www.greatescapestagecompany.com

Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol $8-15. Thunder Bay Theatre, 400 N. Second Ave.,

See Happenings, page 32

Out Of The Labyrinth, Into The Light

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

After two decades, "Unto Us A Child is Born," a same-sex family portrait by well-known gay Michigan artist Carl Demeulenaere, is openly out and proudly on display at the Flint Institute of Arts through Jan. 4, 2015.

The once controversial miniature, originally acquired by the Founders Society for the permanent collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts in 1993, was reluctantly, rarely – perhaps even grudgingly – presented for public viewing since its DIA purchase.

Truth be known, "Unto Us" was a highly closeted DIA acquisition.

"The painting," says Demeulenaere, "depicts a male couple who have conceived a child from their love. The 'new Christ child.' A star of Bethlehem shines over the baby's head. Both partners exchange visual vows symbolizing spiritual commitment to a better life for all same-sex-attraction persons.

"The gold brocaded frame suggests transcendental sanction of their mutual respect and determination for fulfillment and a better life. I hope that museum visitors will come to acknowledge through my paintings the standard I've sought to uphold through so many years of personal darkness and infrequent light in my own journey as an artist."

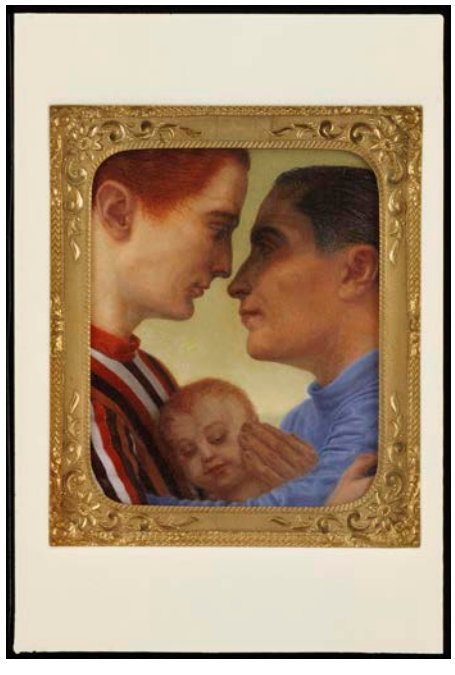
Demeulenaere's Flint Institute of Arts exhibition is titled, "LABYRINTH: The Circuitous Life of A Miniaturist." This masterful collection is intimately presented on a Title Wall and in seven separate spaces. There are 115 radiant and exacting miniatures, 22 amulets, 17 origami pieces and 12 drawing "correspondences."

Demeulenaere's art, while LGBT timely and contemporary – somewhat reminiscent of gay Magic Realist painters George Tooker and Paul Cadmus – draws on inspiration from Northern and Italian Renaissance masters, French Neoclassical and British Pre-Raphaelite traditions. His many past installations and exhibits have been noteworthy, well-attended and critically acclaimed.

An accompanying FIA brochure says of "LABYRINTH": "Carl Demeulenaere aims to take the viewer on a visual journey, exploring historical, religious and social ideas that he has been engaged with in a personal way. His more recent works focus on life's uncertainty and death's inevitability and bring the viewer full circle from beginning to end."

Of his own journey as a gay man, Demeulenaere says, "Coming from a small and closely-knit family, my philosophies about art and life markedly changed in the early 1990s as a result of the tragic losses of my mother to cancer and several friends to AIDS-related causes. I began doing volunteer work for AIDS research organizations, and as an artist became interested in examining the public's perception of the homosexual community.

"I decided that there was a need to communicate a positive message about my community and to show, in turn, how all communities are universally linked. The legacy of compassion and understanding left to me by my mother and my many lost friends impels me to use my artistic abilities to make an appeal for understanding, tolerance, respect for and between all minorities."



For Flint Institute of Arts information call 810-234-1695 or visit www.flintarts.org/exhibitions.

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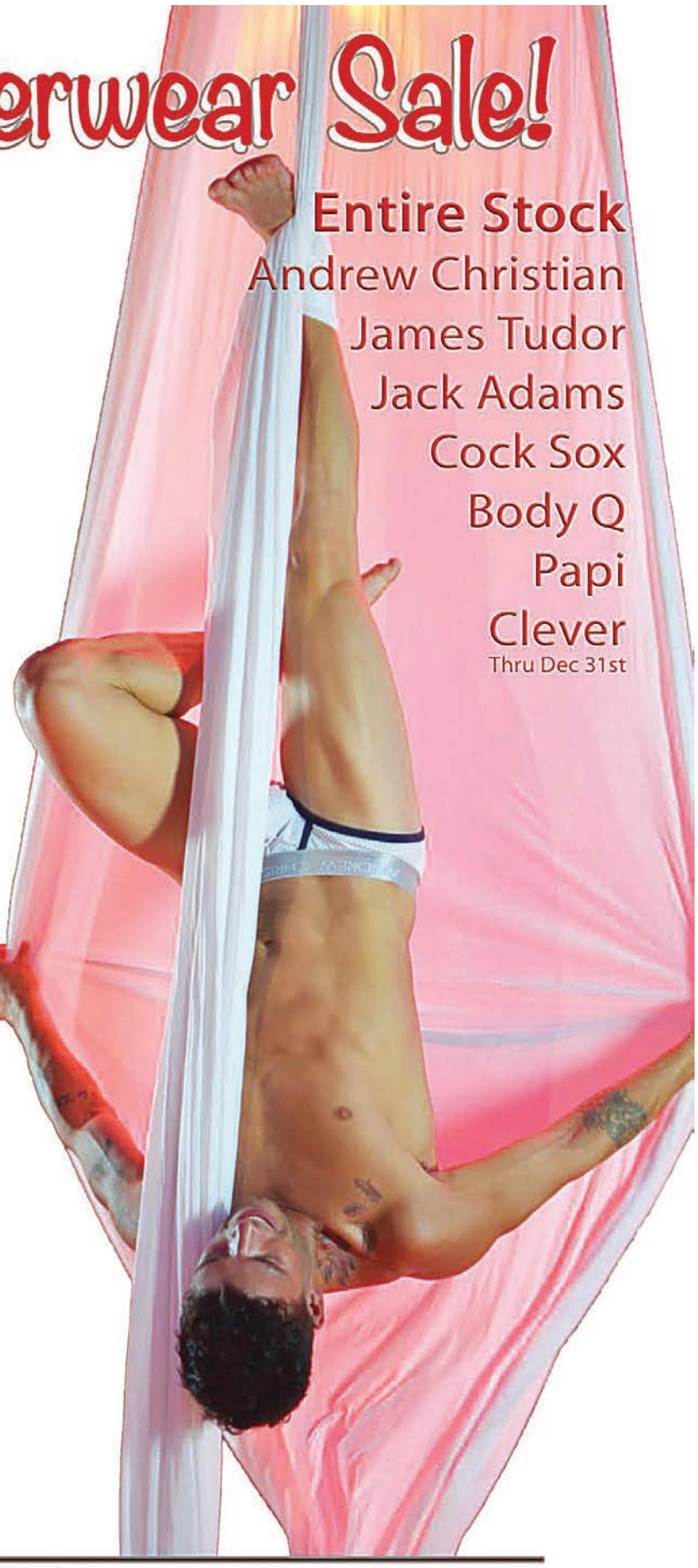

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Puzzle solution on pg. 34

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Editor's Pick

Ann Arbor's Yourist Studio Gallery gets the gift-giving season going with their holiday festivities this weekend. Fresh and unique ceramic pieces will be shown and available for purchase.

In addition to holiday cheer, the gallery offers local and national ceramic artists a place to work. The studio workspace has allowed various ceramic artists to flourish and provide works for the general public to view and own.

The holiday show and sale begins at 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12. The free event is at Yourist Studio Gallery, 1133 Broadway, Ann Arbor. For more information, visit www.youristpottery.com or call 734-662-4914.

► Happenings

Continued from p.30

Alpena. Through Dec. 14. 989-354-2267. www.thunderbaytheatre.com

Mame $20. Riverbank Theatre, 358 S. Water St., Marine City. Through Dec. 21. 810-278-1749. www.riverbanktheatre.com

Miracle on South Division Street $15-35. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Road, Williamston. Through Dec. 28. 517-655-SHOW. www.williamstontheatre.org

Old Jews Telling Jokes $41-48. The Jewish Ensemble Theatre Company at Aaron DeRoy Theatre on the campus of the Jewish Community Center, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield. Through Dec. 21. 248-788-2900. www.jettheatre.org

Pinocchio $12-18. Flint Youth Theatre, 1220 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Through Dec. 21. 810-237-1530. www.flintyouththeatre.org

Red $15-20. Open Book Theatre Company at Penelope's Venue, 12219 Dix Toledo Road, Southgate. Through Dec. 13. 734-288-7753. www.openbooktc.com

Romeo and Juliet $10-31. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through Dec. 13. 313-577-2972. www.finearts.wayne.edu

Sister's Christmas Catechism: The Mystery of the Magi's Gold $38. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 11 - 14. 313-471-6611. www.olympiaentertainment.com

Snow Queen $10 adults, $5 children. PuppetART at Detroit Puppet Theater, 25 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit. Dec. 6 - Jan. 31. 313-961-7777. www.puppetart.org

Sundays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

The Rainmaker $27-32. Tipping Point Theatre, 361 E. Cady St., Northville. Through Dec. 14. 248-347-0003. www.tippingpointtheatre.com

The Winter's Tale 10. Slipstream Theatre Initiative at Michigan Actors Studio, 648 E. Nine Mile Road, Ferndale. Through Dec. 31. 248-298-9617. www.slipstreamti.com

This Wonderful Life $27. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through Dec. 18. 734-663-0681. www.pntheatre.org

Thursdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. www.gocomedy.net

Wicked $49+. Broadway in Detroit, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway St., Detroit. Dec. 10 - Jan. 4. 313-237-SING. www.broadwayindetroit.com

Woodward Wonderland $16-32. Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit at Detroit Film Theatre inside the Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 11 - 14. 313-833-7900. www.mosaicdetroit.org

ART 'N' AROUND

Cranbrook Art Museum "Iris Eichenberg: Bend". Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 23 - Jan. 25. 877-462-7262. www.Cranbrook.edu

Cranbrook Art Museum "The Cranbrook Hall of Wonders: Artworks, Objects and Natural Curiosities". Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. Nov. 23 - March 22. 877-462-7262. www. Cranbrook.edu

Cranbrook Art Museum "Warhol On Vinyl: The Record Covers, 1949-1987+" Drawing from the world's preeminent collection of record covers by Andy Warhol, this exhibition showcases how Warhol used the record cover as a means to popularize his name and directly impact popular culture. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. June 21 - Feb. 28. 877-462-7262. www. Cranbrookart.edu

Detroit Artists Market (DAM) "Art for the Holidays" The gallery transforms from a fine art exhibition space to a fun, energetic gift market. Detroit Artists Market, 4719 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Nov. 26 - Dec. 30. 313-832-8540. www. Detroitartistsmarket.org

Detroit Institute of Arts "Guest of Honor: Monet's Waterlily Pond, Green Harmony". Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Oct. 1 - Jan. 4. 313-833-7900. www. Dia.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Labyrinth" The circuitous life of a miniaturist. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. Nov. 1 - Jan. 4. 810-234-1695. www. Flintarts.org

Ford Piquette Avenue Plant "2014 Piquette Holiday Open House" We will be serving hot cocoa and cookies. During the event, gift shop items will be 10 off! Dress warmly, as the museum isn't heated. Tours are two for $10. Ford Piquette Avenue Plant, 461 Piquette, Detroit. Dec. 13 - Dec. 13. 313-872-8759. www. Fordpiquetteplant.org

James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History "Menagerie, or Artwork Not About Love". Elaine L. Jacob Gallery, 480 W. Hancock, Detroit. Oct. 24 - Dec. 12. 313-577-2423. www. Wayne.edu

Janice Charach Gallery " Pictures of Resistance: The Wartime Photographs of Jewish Partisan Faye Schulman" This exhibition presents one partisan's wartime story. Joining the partisans was Faye Schulman's path to survival and her chance to avenge the deaths of her family members. Jewish Community Center of Metro Detroit, 6600 W. Maple Road, West Bloomfield Township. Oct. 19 - Dec. 14. 248-661-1000. www. Jccdet.org

Michigan State University Museum "Michigan and the Civil War" Exhibit highlights Michigan connections in the Civil War. Michigan State University Museum, 409 W. Circle Dr., East Lansing. Aug. 4 - Dec. 31. 517-355-7474. www. museum.msu.edu

MOCAD "Prospect. 3 Tour". Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Dec. 10 - Dec. 14. 313-832-6622. www. Mocadetroit.org

Neighborhood Service Organization "Through Our Eyes Gallery Opening" It is an emotional experience to see life through the eyes of the once homeless. Neighborhood Service Organization (NSO) Bell Building tenants took to photography earlier this year to tell their stories as part of the NSO Bell-Oakland University PhotoVoice Research Project. Their photos makeup the Through Our Eyes exhibit that will be showcased at the NSOs Through Our Eyes Gallery Exhibit, whose opening is at 6 p.m., Thurs., Nov. 20. PhotoVoice is a research methodology that uses photography to empower people to show their journeys and struggles. Please RSVP to dfigurski@nso-mi.org by Nov. 17. Swords into Plowshares Gallery, 33 E. Adams St., Detroit. Nov. 20 - Dec. 13. 313-961-4890. ww. Nso-mi.org

River's Edge Gallery "Virgo Rising" Patricia Izzo and Martine MacDonald. River's Edge Gallery, 3024 Biddle, Wyandotte. Nov. 22 - Dec. 31. 734-246-9880. www. Artattheedge.com

Saugatuck Center for the Arts "Permeated Surfaces" Original works from three Chicago based artists. Saugatuck Center for the Arts, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Dec. 12 - Feb. 6. 269-857-2399. www. Sc4a.org

Yourist Studio Gallery "Yourist Studio Gallery Annual Holiday Sale" Come browse fresh ceramic pieces by Yourist Studio Gallery resident artists while you enjoy abundant holiday cheer at our festive opening Dec. 12. Free. Yourist Studio Gallery, 1133 Broadway, Ann Arbor. Dec. 12 - Dec. 14. 734-662-4914. www. Youristpottery.com

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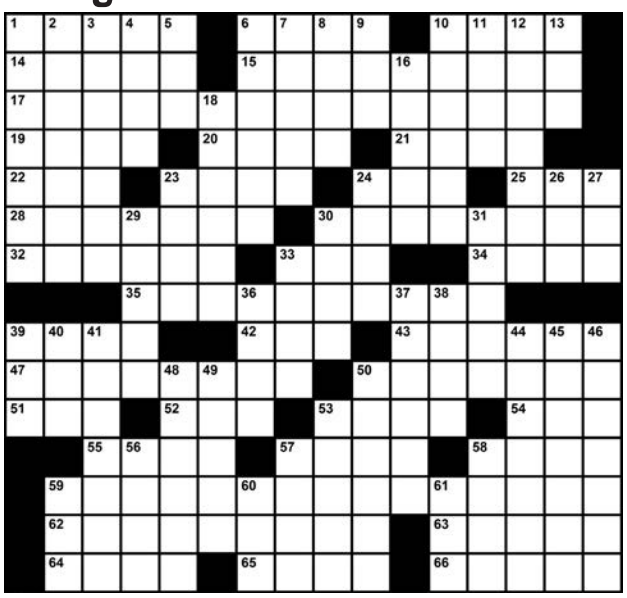

Across

1 Rainbow maker
6 "Mamma Mia!" band
10 Like sex with a condom
14 Hertz ___-Car
15 Falsies?
17 TV movie in which Patrick Wilson played a gay Mormon
19 Agenda listing
20 Totals
21 Straight, in a bar
22 Type of job
23 Tournament passes
24 Type of meeting
25 AOL or MSN, e.g.
28 Needing to be set straight
30 Movie in which Cher played a lesbian
32 Wetland birds
33 Camille screenwriter Akins
34 Poet Seward
35 With 59-Across, Elizabeth Taylor movie
39 Upfront amount
42 Aardvark entree
43 Gets rough with
47 Williams-Lane movie, with "The"
50 "Long Walk to Freedom" writer
51 La mer, essentially
52 Part of Q and A (abbr.)
53 Tracks in mud
54 Pro Bowl side
55 Langston Hughes' "Life Is ___"
57 Long division subject
58 All possible starting words
59 See 35-Across
62 He played Grace's dad
63 Military muff
64 Actor Auberjonois
65 First to be counted
66 Actor Malcolm-___ Warner

Down

1 Setting for Cather's "My ¡ntonia"
2 Doing a show based on "La Boheme"?
3 Boxer Johansson
4 Pansy supporter
5 Baudelaire's "Fleurs du ___ "
6 Puts up with
7 Stock counterparts
8 Wraps around drag queens
9 SDI weapon
10 Barely move?
11 "Aida" solo
12 Group for same sect's marriage?
13 Emissions-watching org.
16 Title character for Barbra
18 Affirms orally
23 B in Leviticus
24 Place on piles
26 Prince Hal, to Henry IV
27 Palm Pilot, e.g.
29 Copied a kitty
30 Needing Cialis?
31 Went in ankle-deep
33 Billy of "Cleopatra" (1999)
36 Doesn't stay up
37 First name in mystery
38 Justice Fortas
39 "Guys and Dolls" co-creator Burrows
40 Peeples of "Fame"
41 Oral treat
44 White caps
45 Hay for a stallion, perhaps
46 Diplomatic
48 Like a real bitch
49 "End of" tail
50 Pirate uprising
53 Took away in cuffs
56 Bizet opera title character
57 Nichols, who directed the movies in this puzzle
58 Hebrides island
59 Water sports accessory
60 Would-be master's test
61 Daily, for bears, for short

Solution on pg. 32

A Couple of guys
by Dave Broussard
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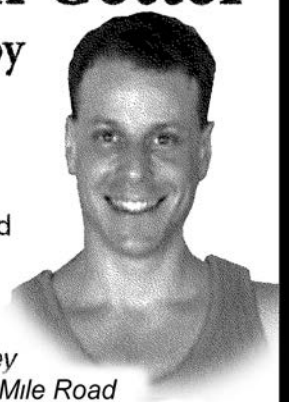

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